



PROPERTY OF THE CHURCH ON THE WAY

Antiquissima
huius terre appellatio
fuit Canaan, à filio Chani sic
dicto cuius filij eam inter se dis-
tribuerunt. Fuerunt autem in Sydon,
Heibei, Iebusei, Amorrei, Gergisei,
et Hamatheni, etc. Retinuit autem hec ter-
ra hoc nomen, donec Israelus post ter-
te Canaan partem cis, partem subacta
occuparet: inde cepit vocari Israel à
Iaco patriarcha. Ptolomeus et alij eam
vocant Palestinam à Palestinis quos
sacri libri Philistin vocant
Hodie cum terram Sane
nam nuncupant.

MARIS

MED

MARE AEGYPTIVM.



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Norwood, Frederick William.

St. Luke : a little library of exposition,
with new studies

The
Study
Bible



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"Ye shall find a babe . . . lying in a manger."—
S. Luke ii. 12.

THE STUDY BIBLE

Editor: JOHN STIRLING

ST. LUKE

*A Little Library
of Exposition*

with

New Studies

by

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1926

CASELL & COMPANY, LTD
London, Toronto, Melbourne, & Sydney

PROPERTY OF
THE CHURCH ON THE WAY

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491

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Vol. 39

C. 2

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First published 1926

TO THE READER OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

A book for wayfarers is the Gospel of St. Luke. Wherever you open it, the glint of a road runs down to your feet, inviting you to make the journey to Bethlehem or the Holy City ; to climb the slopes of Olivet or go down to Galilee ; to follow the road to Sidon or tarry for a while at Emmaus ; promising that, whichever road you take, you will find it a path of righteousness and a way of peace.

Many fellow-travellers, since the days of His flesh, have turned their steps into these hallowed ways. Like the disciples of old, they have pondered in their hearts the words which fell by the wayside, but which passed not away with the day ; and to our joy and comfort the truth which they sought to understand has leavened and preserved their meditations. Some of these treasured thoughts have been gathered into this volume, that we may have fellowship one with another during the days of our pilgrimage.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE Editor would acknowledge with gratitude his indebtedness to Messrs. T. & T. Clark for their kindness in allowing him to make extracts from Dr. A. Plummer's work on this Gospel in *The International Commentary*, and from Dr. A. B. Bruce's *Parabolic Teaching of Christ*; also to Messrs. W. Collins & Son, Ltd., for permitting him to bring into contribution to this volume the expositions of Dr. David Brown in their *Critical and Experimental Commentary* on the Bible; to Messrs. John Murray, Ltd., for allowing him to use in a similar way *The Speaker's Commentary*; and to Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., for allowing him to make quotation from their *Expositor's Dictionary of Texts* and *The Anglican Pulpit Library*.

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An Appreciation

ST. LUKE
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BOOK IN
THE WORLD

BY

F. W. NORWOOD, D.D.

THE
FIRST
STUDY

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of the Soul.

ST. LUKE

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BOOK IN THE WORLD

BY F. W. NORWOOD, D.D.

IT was Ernest Renan who said that the Gospel according to Luke is the most beautiful book in the world. Since there is no precise standard by which beauty may be judged, some might be disposed to differ from him, especially as few could pretend to have read all the books in the world, but at least his *obiter dictum* has about it the ring of truth. Luke's story is exquisitely beautiful.

To the believing mind which sees in the central Figure what the Evangelist himself saw, beauty is of only subsidiary importance. An earlier age than our own would have regarded it as unworthy of consideration, so overwhelming were the issues involved in the life and death of the Redeemer. It would have sacrificed charm and much else beside to be sure that there had been preserved the exact words which fell from the lips of Jesus.

If our own age is less confident in its dogmatic beliefs, it is at least more responsive to literary charm, and Luke himself is arriving at a literary eminence of which he probably thought very little while he penned his story. To him it would have seemed a sorry thing to be exalted as an author but discredited as an evangelist.

His whole thought was absorbed in the Christ. It does not appear that he had any concern for literary fame. Possibly that was why he wrote so well. His eye was single, hence his whole body was full of light.

He does not appear to have written for the public,

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but only for a personal friend, unknown to fame, named Theophilus, for whom he desired the most thorough instruction concerning Jesus of Nazareth. His Gospel is really an epistle, a communication from one friend to another. Surely never did a personal friendship call forth so exquisite a letter.

Something of Luke's personality, as was inevitable, pervades the narrative. No man ever yet wrote or said anything worth while without revealing his own soul. The older idea of inspiration, which would have suppressed the personality of the writer, making of him a mere photographer where scenes were described, and a phonograph where the spoken word was involved, is ludicrously inferior to the truth. The most reverent faith may well be thankful for the personality of Luke himself, through which as through a prism we see the face of Jesus. The soul is the final medium of vision. We ourselves can only see the Christ in some way that is peculiar to ourselves, and we may wisely rejoice that in this Gospel, while finding Jesus, we discern also the "beloved physician," whose name was Luke.

It is more than doubtful whether Luke himself had ever personally known Jesus. There is no hint in his writing that they had ever met. He is plainly a late-comer upon the field as a biographer. It is in that character that he writes. He begins by telling us that many before him had "set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." Why he should add to the number he does not say, except to remark that "it seemed good to me also," though he adds that he had enjoyed "perfect understanding of all things from the very first." Some feeling of fitness, the roots of which were buried deeply within the mystery of his own

soul, made him conscious that he had something to say which had not yet been said.

He was, as we know, a friend and companion of Paul. He was evidently a very devoted friend. He accompanied him upon his journeys and shared in his perils. "Only Luke is with me," wrote Paul in prison, after commenting sadly upon those who had deserted him; and it was he who gave to Luke the name which endears him to us, "the beloved physician."

Yet Luke was no mere Boswell, even to Paul. He maintained his own point of view. The fiery apostle was a very dominating personality. He was impatient of opposition, overwhelming in argument, clear-cut and uncompromising in his mental processes. He inaugurated a new school of Christian thought which is known to this day as Paulinism. It was subtle and logical and intensely theological. It was far more concerned with the universe than with Galilee. It made little direct use of the life and sayings of Jesus of Nazareth. It dealt with their implications, but not with their historic setting. The earthly Jesus was very real to Paul, but in his Christology as well as in another connection it would seem that "flesh and blood do not inherit the Kingdom of God." Jesus had lived and died, but to Paul He was pre-eminently the Risen One. His mind moved naturally among things metaphysical and transcendental.

Now, Luke was a humanist. In his Gospel there is no trace of Paulinism. That may be because it was written before he came into such close contact with the apostle, but it was also his natural bent. Even when he came to be Paul's biographer, it is of the man he tells us rather than of his doctrines and arguments. The human Jesus was everything to Luke. The Gospel

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was manifestly written before the "Acts," but one feels that if Luke had not already given much time to putting together "all that Jesus began both to do and to teach" when he met Paul, the manner of the apostle's presentation of the Risen Christ would have been the very thing to have driven his companion back to the original sources. He would have wanted to know more about the Man of whom Paul had such wonderful things to say. We are conscious of a patient collaborator, a searcher into records, an eager listener to tales that were told, a genial, kindly, earnest man who was determined to get at the facts concerning Jesus of Nazareth. What he was persuaded of he wrote down for his friend Theophilus.

There is in all his work the note of Christian universalism. That in itself would establish an affinity with Paul, but whereas the apostle found his main starting-point at the Resurrection, Luke went farther back to the cradle at Bethlehem. This medical student of men's bodies was absorbingly interested in the flesh-and-blood life of Jesus of Nazareth.

Yet he does not write as if Jesus was to him only an ordinary human person. It is manifest that at the back of his mind is always the thought of Christ as the Risen Lord. The Church is already established as he writes. It is busily engaged in claiming for Christ the sovereignty of the world. The twelve disciples, most of whom had been humble fishermen of Galilee, are now the chosen apostles. Luke is noticeably tender of their reputations. It has been pointed out that he passes over more than one incident in which the Twelve had not shown to advantage. He does not mention the stern word that Jesus spoke to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." We do not learn from him that

Peter, on his third denial, "began to curse and to swear," but only that he said, "I know not what thou sayest." Luke is a kindly man and his purpose is to edify. It is not a departure from truth to pass over in courteous silence the foible of a man who has long since repented and is now a veritable bulwark of the Church. The gramophone theory of inspiration might have demanded that even the oaths of Peter should be recorded, but if others had already set these things "forth in order," Luke is content to pass them by in silence.

Neither does it weaken Luke's position as a credible historian to observe that he puts a particular emphasis upon one feature of the character of Christ. He is the revealer of the graciousness of Jesus. That element in our Lord's character is all the more wonderful since He is to Luke the Eternal Christ. That such as He should be gracious has the quality of an evangel. It is the compassion of God made manifest in the flesh. For Him to be "the friend of publicans and sinners" is not merely a breach of convention, it is a revelation of the love of the Most High. It coincides with Luke's idea of Christian universalism. Here is not a partnership between men as equal contributors, but a brotherhood of grace. Sinners are not to be eliminated from his Utopia, but to be redeemed and made its citizens.

With such a Figure as that of Christ around which to group these scenes, and with such a heart as that of Luke to interpret it, no wonder that Renan should have said "this is the most beautiful book in the world." The evangelist is careless of historic sequence; his method is eclectic. He tells the truth, but he selects it as a jeweller selects his precious stones, and he has hung

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upon the bowed neck of the muse of history the most beautiful rope of pearls that ever gladdened the eye.

Nobody can compare the Gospel according to Luke with the other three without observing that he has given us a cluster of entirely new stories. Where he got them from nobody can say, but they are an integral part of the life-story of Jesus. They are woven into its very texture.

It is to Luke that we are indebted for the most beautiful of the two stories of the birth of Jesus. It is pastoral in its simplicity, telling of shepherds and lowing kine, but it is much more like poetry than prose. Matthew tells of a star in the heaven, of wise men guided by dreams and presenting their princely gifts to the Babe ; but Luke's tale is of a modest maiden and of her inward communings, of shepherds who watched over their sheep, and of cattle whose crib was borrowed to do service as a cradle for the Babe who lay asleep amid the hay.

It is the most beautiful story of the birth of a babe that ever was told in this world. This, at least, everyone must admit. The spirit of controversy has disturbed its serenity, and the most charming idyll has been made the centre of theological strife. Men presume to debate the conditions of birth as though it was one subject they knew all about, whereas the truth is that it is the most amazing miracle there is in the world. The resurrection of the dead is not nearly so startling as the birth of a child. The one seems too wonderful to be true because it never happens ; the other is treated as a commonplace because it constantly happens. Human participation in the event is but the symbol of that Divine and human partnership wherein what we know and do is but a rivulet which flows into the ocean of the mysterious. They who see in the birth of *any*

child naught but the human act that conditions it may think they see, but are blind as blind can be. The ultimate truth about the advent of the lowliest child is much nearer to the Incarnation than to the statistician's report upon the birth-rate. We are never nearer the Kingdom of heaven than when some expectant mother whispers to her soul, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called a Son of God."

There is no place in this article for an argument concerning what is called the Miraculous Conception. It is in fact the last thing that can be appropriately "argued" about in any place whatsoever. The final conclusion, upon whichever side it falls, is of the nature of faith. It is not fundamental to the reality of Christ. The faith of some men is established by its acceptance, while that of others is not overthrown by its denial. But it is worth while considering what manner of Life this was about which Luke could tell this story, and for exquisite beauty it stands unparalleled in the world. The "most beautiful book in the world" derives its beauty not from literary creativeness, but from "the loveliest Life" that ever was lived. And Luke the humanist is true to himself in the telling of it.

At the other end of the narrative, when the mystery of the Resurrection is described, we discern again his special characteristics. None but Luke has given us the perfectly human story of the Walk to Emmaus. To it is given a surprising amount of space. Thousands have taken that Sabbath day's journey since with the two heavy-hearted men who sorrowed over their broken hopes until their eyes were suddenly opened and they knew Him to be alive whom they mourned. There is no more beautiful hymn than that which has grown out of the story, "Abide with me; fast falls the even-

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tide." Luke the humanist found the tale which has meant more in the experience of men than the earthquake and the angels that the other evangelists love to dwell upon.

This is the inspired genius of this man. His narrative is encrusted with those "little tales of Jesus" that are so perfectly human and yet so divine. We call them parables. They may never have actually happened, but they embody the thought of Jesus about God and human life. Luke did not invent them, but he garnered what others had thrown aside. Perhaps to them they seemed commonplace since they were so human, but to Luke they trembled with unutterable meaning. It "seemed good to him" to incorporate them in the everlasting message.

He tells of the striking differences there are in men's thoughts concerning themselves: how one man came into the Temple, swelling with importance, thanking God that he was not as other men, pompously recalling his own good deeds, while another was so overwhelmed that he durst not lift up his eyes toward heaven, but with bowed head smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

He tells of the amazing disparity in the worldly condition of men: how one dwelt within his mansion faring sumptuously every day, while another languished at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from his neighbour's table, glad to have his sores licked by the tongues of pariah dogs who were more friendly than his own kind.

He tells of the degrees of compassion that are found in different hearts: how a priest and a Levite, finding a wounded, dying man by the roadside, look at him and pass on, fearful lest the ordinances of God should be

hindered by mercy that tarried to give succour, while another, and he a stranger and a hated Samaritan, pours oil and wine upon his wounds, forgetting all distinctions in the presence of helpless suffering.

He tells us of the indifference to justice which even an appointed guardian may feel whose circumstances are comfortable, and of the eager, passionate demands of a widow-woman who has felt in her breast the barbed edge of wrong, and who wearies him out by her persistence, since she cannot arouse his conscience.

He tells us of the degrees of hospitality men show to one another : how one man is so eager to speed a traveller that he invites him to his house too precipitately to remember that he has not sufficient food to set before him, and then must needs go and disturb the sleep of a churlish neighbour and make his desire for rest prick his charity into action.

He tells how a shepherd values one sheep that is lost more than ninety and nine that are safe in the fold ; how a woman who never grew excited over her ten pieces of silver turns the whole house upside-down to find one piece that goes astray ; and of how a father yearns over a reckless son who has disgraced him in a fashion that exposes him to the charge of favouritism from the other son who has never disobeyed. He does not stop to argue the rationality of it, being content to let the heart speak for itself ; yet he makes us feel that there are possibilities of filial relationship both to an earthly parent and to the Divine Father that have deeper fountains than duty done with an eye to the expected inheritance.

None of these stories would have come to us but for Luke. Where he got them, nobody can say. That they are stories of Jesus no one can doubt. My feeling is

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that they did not appeal to the other Synoptics and were far too devoid of evidence for the purpose of the Fourth Evangelist. Perhaps they seemed rather like the tales that Lincoln used to tell which so irritated the members of his Cabinet. They seemed to be mere asides. They had an ear for more formal statements of doctrine. They were eager to tell of the actual adventures of their Master. Perhaps even with Him, what He thought was more important than what happened to Him. What He thought He embodied oft in tales. To this day, while few could repeat the Sermon on the Mount, everybody remembers the stories that He told and which Luke rescued for us. The Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, Dives and Lazarus, one typical Pharisee over against one typical Publican, are part of our intellectual inheritance. Merely to mention them is to crystallise whole systems of conduct.

As the world rolls on we shall think more and more of God in forms suggested by the attitude of man towards man. Many cannot find God because they have not yet discovered man. They cannot be sure of forgiveness because they have never forgiven. They have no consciousness of mercy because they are not merciful.

One trembles to think how much poorer the world would have been if Luke had resisted the impulse to write to Theophilus; if he had not been inspired to see that the doctrines of Jesus are enshrined in the stories he told. Luke never claimed to be an inventor, but only an additional narrator. God needed a humanist to complete the work of the theologians. The ultimate end of dogma is to reach its fulfilment in lives of flesh and blood.

Luke, according to Renan, who was by no means a full believer, has given us "the most beautiful book in

the world." He accomplished it because he wrote of the most beautiful life that ever was lived.

If the poet Keats was right when he wrote :

Beauty is truth, truth beauty, . . .

then with great confidence we may say, "Is not this the Christ, the Saviour of the world ?"

Four Gospels tell their story to mankind,
And none so full of soft, caressing words
That bring the Maid of Bethlehem and her Babe
Before our tear-dimmed eyes, as his who learned
In the meek service of his gracious art
The tones which, like the medicinal balms
That calm the sufferer's anguish, soothe our souls.
O. W. HOLMES.

The Gospel of the Saintly Life.—PLUMPTRE.

He was a physician ; and so too all his words are
medicines of the drooping soul.—JEROME.

Thou hast an ear for angel songs.—KEBLE.

St. Luke's is the Gospel for the Greeks ; the Gospel
of the Future ; the Gospel of Progressive Christianity,
of the Universality and Gratuitousness of the Gospel ;
the Historic Gospel ; the Gospel of Jesus as the Good
Physician and the Saviour of Mankind.—FARRAR.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Drawn from many
sources to illustrate
the great Texts and
Teaching of the Book

AMONG THE FIRST to begin an exposition of this Gospel was ORIGEN, the famous professor of Sacred Learning at Alexandria, whose mystical and allegorical interpretations were received with enthusiasm in the third century, but which are not followed to-day ; nevertheless his writings contain many passages which deserve to be read for their beauty and depth. BASIL the Great, who succeeded EUSEBIUS as Bishop of Cæsarea, vigorously opposed Origen's method of reading the Scriptures, and along with his brother, GREGORY OF NYSSA, and the companion of his studies, GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS, whom he met at Athens, sought to find a middle course in exegesis between literalism and allegory. The literal sense of Scripture appears in some of the pious and forcible comments of AMBROSE, the practical Bishop of Milan, but in the main he followed the lead of Origen. CHRYSOSTOM, who must be considered one of the masters of exposition in the Early Church, used very cautiously the mystic key to open the treasury of Revelation. He looked for the sense of the words in the context, and held that every passage should be studied as a whole. Good sense and fine scholarship controlled his interpretations, which are also warm with genial, human sympathy. This sympathy, combined with seraphic devotion, kindles the heart of the reader of BONAVENTURA'S writing upon this Gospel. Under the teaching of our English Alexander de Hales he became a doctor of the University of Paris, and forms a link with some of the later Western writers who have tried to combine mysticism and scholasticism in their expositions of the Bible.

PROPERTY OF
THE CHURCH ON THE WAY

ST. LUKE

THE PREFACE TO HIS GOSPEL

It seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus ; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.

Luke I. 3-4.

THEOPHILUS means, “loving God,” or “being loved by God.” Whoever then loves God, or desires to be loved by Him, let him think this Gospel to have been written to him, and preserve it as a gift presented to him, a pledge entrusted to his care. The promise was not to explain

the meaning of certain new and strange things to Theophilus, but to set forth the truth in which he had been instructed.—BEDE.

Or it may be, “That thou mightest feel certain and satisfied as to the truth of those things which thou hast heard, now that thou beholdest the same in writing.”—CHRYSOSTOM.

If you are a *lover* of God, a *Theophilus*, it is written to thee. If it is written to thee, then accept the writer’s gift. Carefully preserve in the closet of your heart this token of friendship. The moth consumes what, when read, we are negligent to preserve.

Now no one has doubted that this book of the Gospel is more full of details than the others ; by these words then he claims not to write everything, but from a review of everything. Purposely has Luke passed by things that were written by others, in order that each book of the Gospel might be distinguished by certain mysteries and miracles peculiar to itself.—AMBROSE.

Certainty has place where nothing of a spurious character is added, nothing that is necessary is omitted (left to be wished for), and all the particulars are attested and proved by adequate evidence.—BENGEL.

THE INFANCY

THE HOLY NAME

*(Thou) shalt call his name
Jesus.*

Luke I. 31.

THE name Jesus was one full of meaning, but it was not as yet a specially sacred name. In its Old Testament form of Jehoshua (Num. xiii. 16), Joshua, or Jeshua (Num. xiv. 6 ; Neh. viii. 17), it meant "Jehovah is salvation"; and the change of the name of the captain of Israel from Hoshea, which did not include the Divine name, to the form which gave this full significance (Num. xiii. 16) had made it the expression of the deepest faith of the people. After the return from Babylon it received a new prominence in connection with the high-priest Joshua, the son of Josedech (Hag. i. 1 ; Zech. iii. 1), and appears in its Greek form in Jesus the father, and again in the son, of Sirach. In the New Testament itself we find it borne by others. It had not been directly associated, however, with Messianic hopes, and the intimation that it was to be the name of the Christ gave a new character to men's thoughts of the kingdom. Not conquest, but "salvation"—deliverance, not from human enemies only or chiefly, nor from the penalties of sin, but from the sins themselves. As spoken by the angel it was the answer to prayers and hopes, going beyond the hope, and purifying it from earthly thoughts. As recorded by the Evangelist it was a witness that he had been taught the true nature of the kingdom of the Christ.—PLUMPTRE.

The meaning is, Thou shalt give Him this name, and He shall be in act what His name, Jesus, or Saviour, signifies ; for He, by Himself, and no other, shall save His people, not from their temporal enemies the Romans, but from their deadly sins.

CHR. WORDSWORTH.

Whatever you write, it has no relish for me, unless I read there Jesus. Whatever you say in dispute, or conference, it has no relish for me, unless it speak of Jesus. . . . The Name of Jesus is medicine to the soul. . . . Nothing so checks the violence of anger, allays the swelling of pride, heals the wounds of envy, restrains the flow of wantonness, extinguishes the fire of lust, slakes the thirst of covetousness, and puts to flight the temptation to every impure affection. For, when I name Jesus, I represent to myself the Man, "meek and lowly," and of a loving heart; sober, chaste, pitiful; in a word, conspicuous for all purity and holiness, and, at the same time, Himself the Almighty God, who, while He heals us by His example, strengthens us by His aid. All this speaks to my heart in the Name of Jesus.—BERNARD.

Our Lord hath many Divine resemblances in Holy Scriptures, or names, to express His nature. . . . But this Name Jesus includes all: for in this He shows, not so much what He is in Himself, as what He is to us; seeing He vouchsafeth to carry our benefits in His Name.—SUTTON.

This sweet Name contains in it a thousand treasures of good things, in delight whereof St. Paul useth it five hundred times in his Epistles.—DEAN BOYS.

This is the Name which we engrave in our hearts, and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon, and place our hopes in, and love with the overflowings of charity, joy, and adoration.—J. TAYLOR.

The Name which is above every name, the Name in which he who is blessed on earth shall be blessed in heaven.—ANSELM.

“MAGNIFICAT”

*And Mary said,
My soul doth magnify the
Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced
in God my Saviour.
For he hath looked upon the
low estate of his handmaiden :
For behold, from henceforth
all generations shall call me
blessed.
For he that is mighty hath
done to me great things ;
And holy is his name.
And his mercy is unto genera-
tions and generations
On them that fear him.
He hath shewed strength with
his arm ;
He hath scattered the proud in
the imagination of their heart.
He hath put down princes
from their thrones,
And hath exalted them of low
degree.
The hungry he hath filled
with good things ;
And the rich he hath sent
empty away.*

Luke I. 46-53.

THIS sacred hymn breathes forth such lovely mixtures of faith and fear, humility and love, charity and devotion, that it appears she was “full of grace,” as well as “highly favoured.” And it should be our wish and endeavour to repeat it with the same affections and holy fervours, with which she indited it. Perhaps we think we have not the same occasion : it is true, God the Word took flesh in her, and that was her peculiar privilege ; but, if we receive the Word of God and the motions of the Holy Spirit, that attend it, we may turn that Word into flesh by faith and obedience ; if we so hear, as to practise, we do conceive Christ by faith ; He is “formed in us” by the overshadowing power of the Holy Ghost in a pure heart, and He is by holiness brought forth.

DR. COMBER.

The lowliness of Mary was made the heavenly ladder by which God descended upon earth.

O true lowliness, which hath borne God to men, hath given life to mortals, opened the gates of Paradise, and set free the souls of men.—AUGUSTINE.

“ BENEDICTUS ”

*Zacharias was filled with the
Holy Ghost, and prophesied,
saying,
Blessed be the Lord, the God
of Israel ;
For he hath visited and
wrought redemption for his
people,
And hath raised up a horn of
salvation for us
In the house of his servant
David
(As he spake by the mouth of
his holy prophets which have
been since the world began),
Salvation from our enemies,
and from the hand of all that
hate us ;
To show mercy towards our
fathers,
And to remember his holy
covenant ;
The oath which he sware unto
Abraham our father,
To grant unto us that we being
delivered out of the hand of
our enemies
Should serve him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.
Yea and thou, child, shalt
be called the prophet, of the
Most High :*

THE star of St. Luke excels that other star in glory (Matthew), so far as to him belong exclusively the Christian Hymns—the *Magnificat*, *Benedictus*, and *Nunc dimittis*.—J. FORD.

It was His arising in the world, that made the day break and the shadows fly away. The types and shadows of the Law were then abolished. It was His light, that dispelled the mists of ignorance and idolatry ; and He alone delivers the souls from the night of sin and the misery produced by it. All the stars and the moon with them cannot make it day in the world ; this is the sun's prerogative ; nor can nature's highest light, the most refined science and morality, make it day in the soul : for this is Christ's. . . . The sun can make dark things clear, but it cannot make a blind man see them ; but herein is the excellency of this Sun, that He illuminates not only the object, but the faculty ; doth not only reveal the mysteries of His Kingdom,

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*For thou shalt go before the
face of the Lord to make
ready his ways ;*

*To give knowledge of salva-
tion unto his people*

*In the remission of their sins,
Because of the tender mercy
of our God,*

*Whereby the dayspring from
on high shall visit us,*

*To shine upon them that sit
in darkness and the shadow
of death ;*

*To guide our feet into the
way of peace.*

Luke I. 67-79.

with one another by mutual love.—HORNE.

The shadow of death is taken to mean the forgetfulness of the mind. For as death causes that which it kills to be no longer in life, so whatever oblivion touches ceases to be in the memory. Hence the Jewish people who were forgetful of God are said to sit in the shadow of death. The shadow of death is taken also for the death of the flesh, because as that is the true death, by which the soul is separated from God, so that is the shadow of death by which the flesh is separated from the soul.—GREGORY.

The mystery of the Incarnation discovers to man the greatness of his danger, by the greatness of those methods, which he stood in need of for his relief.

PASCAL.

Herald of Christ, the day is come,
The page of life shall be unrolled.

G. MOULTRIE.

but opens blind eyes to behold them. . . .—ABP. LEIGHTON.

The blessed effects of the dayspring which then dawned from on high were : the dispersion of ignorance, which is the darkness of the intellectual world ; the awakening of men from sin, which is the sleep of the soul ; and the direction of their hearts into “ the way of peace ” ; that is, of peace with God by the blood of Christ, peace with themselves by the answer of a conscience cleansed from sin, and peace

THE BOYHOOD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

Luke I. 80.

HE increased in spirit, remaining not in the same measure in which he had begun, but the Spirit was ever growing in him. His will, ever tending to better things, was making its own advances, and his mind, ever contemplating something more divine, while his memory was exercising itself, that it might lay up more and more things in its treasury, and more firmly retain them. But he adds, *And he waxed strong.* For human nature is weak, as we learn, *the flesh is weak.* It must therefore be made strong by the Spirit, for the Spirit is ready. Many wax strong in the flesh, but the wrestler of God must be strengthened by the Spirit that he may crush the wisdom of the flesh. He retires therefore to escape the noise of cities, and the thronging of the people. For it follows, *And he was in the deserts.* Where the air is purer, the sky more clear, and God a closer friend, that as the time had not yet arrived for his baptism and preaching, he might have leisure for praying, and might hold converse with the angels, calling upon God and fearing Him, saying, *Behold, here am I.*—ORIGEN.

He was in the deserts that he might be brought up beyond the reach of the malice of the multitude, and not be afraid of man. For if he had been in the world, perchance he had been corrupted by the friendship and conversation of the world. And secondly, that he who was to preach Christ might also be esteemed trustworthy. But he was hid in the desert until it pleased God to show him forth to the people of Israel.

THEOPHYLACT.

THE NATIVITY

She brought forth her first-born son ; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke II. 7.

Quirinius was sent into Syria.—BEDE.

To those who attentively consider it, there seems to be expressed a kind of sacrament, in its being necessary that Christ should be put down in the registration of the whole world ; in order that His name being written with all, He might sanctify all, and being placed in the census with the whole world, He might impart to the world the communion of Himself.—ORIGEN.

Surely if He had so willed it, He might have come moving the heavens, making the earth to shake, and shooting forth His thunderbolts ; but such was not the way of His going forth ; His desire was not to destroy, but to save ; and to trample upon human pride from its very birth, therefore He is not only man, but a poor man, and has chosen a poor mother, who had not even a cradle where she might lay her new-born Child.—CHRYSOSTOM.

A common inn, where everyone might come, the Gentile, as well as the Jew ; and because perhaps they would not be together in one chamber, (for the Jews, we read, meddle not with the Samaritans, nor keep their company) therefore Christ would be born in the stable, where there is no distinction made, but all are put together.—BP. COSIN.

THE INFANCY

He is confined in the narrow space of a rude manger whose seat is the heavens, that He may give us ample room in the joys of His heavenly kingdom. He who is the bread of angels is laid down in a manger, that He might feast us, as it were the sacred animals, with the bread of His flesh. He who clothes the whole world with its varied beauty, is wrapped up in common linen, that we might be able to receive the best robe ; He by whom all things are made, is folded both hands and feet, that our hands might be raised up for every good work, and our feet directed in the way of peace.—BEDE.

If the swaddling clothes are mean in thy eyes, admire the angels singing praises together. If thou despisest the manger, raise thy eyes a little, and behold the new star in heaven proclaiming to the world the Lord's nativity. If thou believest the mean things, believe also the mighty. If thou disputest about those which betoken His lowliness, look with reverence on what is high and heavenly.—MAXIMUS.

God hath in every birth His admirable work. . . . But God to be the child, and the Word incarnate to be born, that is a wonder able to amaze a world. The great God (saith St. Basil) to be a little babe ; the Ancient of days to become an infant ; the King of Eternity to be a child ; the Founder of the heavens to be rocked in a cradle ;—it is a most incredible thing. The Word, who is God, to become flesh ; God, who is a Spirit, to assume a body ; Majesty, to put on mortality ; Power, to turn infirmity ; God to become man ; this is, as the poet speaks, to bring heaven down to earth. The earth wondered, at Christ's Nativity, to see a new star in heaven ; but heaven might rather wonder to see a new Sun on earth.

R. CLERKE.

THE SHEPHERDS

There were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

Luke II. 8-9.

FOR in a mystery, those shepherds, and their flocks, signify all teachers and guides of faithful souls. The night in which they were keeping watch over their flocks, indicates the dangerous temptations from which they never cease to keep themselves, and those placed under their care. Well also at the birth

of our Lord do shepherds watch over their flocks; for He was born who says, *I am the good Shepherd*: but the time also was at hand in which the same Shepherd was to recall His scattered sheep to the pastures of life.

To speak in a mystery, let the shepherds of spiritual flocks, (nay, all the faithful,) after the example of these shepherds, go in thought even to Bethlehem, and celebrate the incarnation of Christ with due honours. Let us go indeed casting aside all fleshly lusts, with the whole desire of the mind even to the heavenly Bethlehem, (i.e. the house of the living bread,) that He whom they saw crying in the manger we may deserve to see reigning on the throne of His Father.

Every one of us, even he who is supposed to live as a private person, exercises the office of shepherd, if, keeping together a multitude of good actions and pure thoughts, he strive to rule them with due moderation, to feed them with the food of the Scriptures, and to preserve them against the snares of the devil.—BEDE.

Run, shepherds, run, and solemnise His birth.

W. DRUMMOND.

THE ANGELS' SONG

*And the angel said unto them,
Be not afraid ; for behold, I
bring you good tidings of great
joy which shall be to all the
people : for there is born to
you this day in the city of
David a Saviour, which is
Christ the Lord. And this is
the sign unto you ; Ye shall
find a babe wrapped in swad-
dling clothes, and lying in a
manger. And suddenly there
was with the angel a multitude
of the heavenly host praising
God, and saying,
Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men
in whom he is well pleased.*

Luke II. 10-14.

Song of the Angels at the Birth of Christ—" *Glory be to God on high* " : *there* is the honour, the reverent obedience, and the admiration, and the adoration, which we ought to give Him. " *On earth peace ;* " this is the effect of the former, working in the hearts of men, whereby the world appears in his noblest beauty, being an entire chain of inter-mutual amity. " *And good will towards man ;* " this is God's mercy to reconcile man to Himself, after his fearful desertion of his Maker. Search all religions the world through, and you will find none, that ascribes so much to God, nor that constitutes so firm a love among men.

TO Joseph the angel appeared in a dream, as to one who might be easily brought to believe, but to the shepherds in visible shape, as to men of a ruder nature. But the angel went not to Jerusalem, sought not for Scribes and Pharisees (for they were corrupt and tormented with envy). But these were simple men living in the ancient practices of Moses and the Patriarchs. There is a certain road which leads by innocence to Philosophy.

CHRYSOSTOM.

I never found so sure a

direction for Religion, as the

OWEN FELTHAM.

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AT BETHLEHEM

They came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

Luke II. 16.

NO one indolently seeks after Christ.—AMBROSE.

The shepherds give us an example of Christian decision.

They went at once. Faith outruns calculation.—WESTCOTT.

It is not enough Christ is “born”; but, to take benefit by His birth, we are to “find” Him: “He is born,” His part; “ye shall find,” ours. . . . Such a one being born, what shall we be the better, “if we find” Him not? As good not born, as not known. “Born” He may be before; but to us He is born when to us He is known, when we find Him and not before. Christ found is more than Christ born.—BP. ANDREWES.

The little Infant of Bethlehem asks us to grow with Him and into Him, and bids us learn that at every stage we shall find that which corresponds with the manger, “In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”—C. E. NEWBOLT.

The event at Bethlehem was of the Year One; but all years since that, eighteen hundred of them now, have been contributing new growth to it—and see there it stands: the Church! Touching the earth, with one small point; springing out of one small seed-grain, rising out therefrom, ever higher, ever broader, high as the Heaven itself, broad till it overshadow the whole visible Heaven and Earth, and no star can be seen but through *it*. From such a seed-grain so has it grown; planted in the reverences and sacred opulences of the soul of mankind; fed continually by all the noblenesses of some forty generations of men. The world-tree of the nations.—CARLYLE.

“ NUNC DIMITTIS ”

Then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord,

According to thy word, in peace ;

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples ;

A light for revelation to the Gentiles,

And the glory of thy people Israel.

Luke II. 28-32.

THE swan-like song of old Simeon. He speaks, like a merchant, who had got all his goods on shipboard, and now desires the master of the ship to hoist sail and be gone homewards. Indeed what should a Christian, who is but a foreigner here, desire to stay any longer for in the world, but to get this full lading in for heaven ?—GURNALL.

The eyes that have seen Jesus, find all objects but Jesus unworthy of their regard.—AUGUSTINE.

And well is the enlightening of the Gentiles put before the glory of Israel, because when the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in, then shall Israel be safe.—BEDE.

It was not surely worldly happiness that the prudent Simeon was waiting for as the consolation of Israel, but a real happiness, that is, a passing over to the beauty of truth from the shadow of the law.—GREGORY NYSSA.

Mark the wisdom of the good and venerable old man, who before that he was thought worthy of the blessed vision, was waiting for the consolation of Israel, but when he obtained that which he was looking for, exclaims that he saw the salvation of all people. So enlightened was he by the unspeakable radiance of the Child, that he perceived at a glance things that were to happen a long time after.—PHOTIUS.

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

The child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom : and the grace of God was upon him.

Luke II. 40.

HERE we have nothing but a normal orderly development. With Him, as with others, wisdom widened with the years, and came into His human soul through the same channels and by the same processes as into the souls of others—instruction, e.g., in the school of Nazareth, and attendance at its synagogue—the difference being that He, in every stage, attained the perfection of moral and spiritual wisdom which belongs to that stage ; there being in Him no sin or selfishness or pride, such as checks the growth of wisdom in all others. In striking contrast with the true record of the growth of the Son of Man, is that which grew out of the fantastic imaginations of the writers of the Apocryphal Gospels.

E. H. PLUMPTRE.

Our Lord sanctified every age of life by His own susception of it and similitude to it ; for He came to save all people through His own Person ; all, I say, who by Him are born again unto God—infants, boys, children, young men and old. Made an infant, He sanctified the state of infancy ; and, being Himself a child, He sanctified the state of childhood.—IRENÆUS.

Can we think that Holy Scripture thus tells us of the sacred childhood of Jesus and means us not to reverence childhood ? Feel we not (at least if we be not deadened by this world's vanities) a drawing forth of our inmost hearts towards them, a tender love, a reverence for them, which alas ! we cannot have for ourselves, and often not for others of riper years ?

PUSEY.



“ They found him in the temple. . . .”—S. Luke ii. 46.

THE BOY JESUS

They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions : and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

Luke II. 46-47.

How is it that ye sought me ? wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house ?

Luke II. 49.

HE asks questions with reason, He listens with wisdom, and answers with more wisdom, so as to cause astonishment.

METAPHRASTES.

The Lord truly did no miracle in His childhood, yet this one fact St. Luke mentions, which made men look with wonder upon Him.

CHRYSTOSTOM.

He *heard* them with diligent attention, while they expounded the Scripture ; and, when the point was not fully illustrated, *asked them questions* for His further information. . . . "Christ *disputing* with the doctors" is a very common expression. But this is certainly a misrepresentation of the fact ; for we have not a word, said by the Evangelists, concerning any such thing, as disputation ; neither are we told that Jesus was in the professor's chair, but in the place of a learner, or *in the midst* of the Jewish doctors. . . . It is also an injury to our Lord's character. He was in His tender, as well as riper years, a pattern for mankind ; He practised at each period of life what was becoming and amiable in that particular state. Now, as modesty and a teachable temper are essential to the decorum of a youthful conduct, these we may be assured were the distinguishing characteristics of "the Holy Child," Jesus.—J. HERVEY.

He is not found as soon as sought for, for Jesus was

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not among His kinsfolk and relations, among those who are joined to Him in the flesh, nor in the company of the multitude can He be found. Learn where those who seek Him find Him, not everywhere, but in the temple. And do thou then seek Jesus in the temple of God. Seek Him in the Church, and seek Him among the masters who are in the temple. For if thou wilt so seek Him, thou shalt find Him. They found Him not among His kinsfolk, for human relations could not comprehend the Son of God ; not among His acquaintance, for He passes far beyond all human knowledge and understanding. Where then do they find Him ? In the temple ! If at any time thou seek the Son of God, seek Him first in the temple, thither go up, and verily shalt thou find Christ, the Word, and the Wisdom (i.e. the Son of God).—ORIGEN.

The salient point of this narrative appears to lie in “ Thy father ” contrasted with “ My Father.” This was the first time that those wonderful words of self-consciousness had been heard from the Holy Child—when He began to be “ a son of the Law,” He first calls Him His Father, who gave Him the work to do on earth, of perfectly keeping that Law. Up to this time Joseph had been so called by the Holy Child Himself : but from this time never. Such words are not chance.—ALFORD.

But lest it should be thought that now He threw off the filial yoke, and became His own master henceforth, and theirs too, it is purposely added, “ And He went down with them, and was subject unto them.”

DAVID BROWN.

And Mary watched with joy and tears,
And pride and awe, the ripening years.

G. A. CHADWICK.

THE PREPARATION

THE FORERUNNER

The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

Make ye ready the way of the Lord . . .

Luke III. 4.

THE appearance of a prophet, after the great interval of time, contributed to their amazement, because the gift had failed them, and returned to them after a long time. And the nature of his preaching, too, was strange and unusual. For they heard of none of those things, to which they were accustomed ; such as wars, and battles, and victories below, and famine, and pestilence, and Babylonians, and Persians, and the taking of the city, and the other things, with which they were familiar, but of heaven, and of the kingdom there.—CHRYSOSTOM.

But suppose some one should answer, saying, How shall we prepare the way of the Lord, or how shall we make His paths straight ? since so many are the hindrances to those who wish to lead an honest life. To this the word of prophecy replies, Every valley shall be filled, every mountain and hill shall be brought low ; the crooked ways shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth. And this was in a spiritual manner brought to pass by the power of our Saviour.

CYRIL.

The Holy Spirit comes into the heart, first, as a *harbinger* ; secondly, as a private secret guest ; thirdly, as an inhabitant, or house-keeper. Every check of conscience, every sigh for sin, every fear of judgment, every desire of grace, every motion and inclination towards spiritual good, be it never so shortwinded, is a *prælude Spiritus*, a kind of John Baptist to Christ ; something, that God hath sent before, to “ *prepare the way of the Lord.*”—HAMMOND.

THE BAPTISM

The Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son ; in thee I am well pleased.

Luke III. 22.

HE says, *The heavens* opened, as if till then they had been shut. But now the higher and the lower sheep-fold being brought into one, and there being one Shepherd of the sheep, the heavens opened, and man was incorporated a fellow-citizen with the angels.—CHRYSOSTOM.

By the appearance of a dove at Christ's Baptism, the Holy Spirit may have designed to remind the world of what took place at the Creation. The word used in Genesis to express the moving of the Holy Spirit on the face of the waters at the Creation means, fluttering with a tremulous motion, as a dove does ; and so prepared the way for this manifestation of the Holy Ghost at the inauguration of the New Creation in the Baptism of Christ.

We may suppose also that as at the Deluge the return of the dove to the Ark was the signal of the cessation of God's wrath and the return of peace to the world, so the dove was now visible as an emblem of reconciliation and peace in Christ.—CHR. WORDSWORTH.

It is not meant that the shape was like that of a dove, but that the light or glory, by which the Holy Spirit manifested Himself, had a bodily appearance, and descended upon Jesus, in the same manner as a dove descends to the earth.—WHITBY.

The baptism of Christ was the proclamation of His human relationship to man, and of His human relationship to God.—BROOKE.

THE PREPARATION

THE TEMPTATION

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil.

Luke IV. 1-2.

IMMEDIATELY upon His baptism He gave Israel and the world just proof, that the end of His manifestation was to take away the sins of mankind; and for this reason, He began to untwist that triple cord (1 John ii. 15, 16; Gen. iii. 6) wherewith our first parents, and in them their whole posterity, were bound to Satan.—DEAN JACKSON.

The first verse is peculiar to Luke, and very important. Our Lord was now full of the Holy Ghost, and in that fullness He is led up to combat with the enemy. He has arrived at the fullness of the stature of perfect man, outwardly and spiritually. And as when His Church was inaugurated by the descent of the Spirit in His fullness, so now, the first and fittest weapon for the combat is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”—ALFORD.

You see then what kind of arms He uses to defend man against the assaults of spiritual wickedness, and the allurements of the appetite. He does not exert His power as God, (for how had that profited me?) but as man He summons to Himself a common aid, that while intent upon the food of divine reading He may neglect the hunger of the body, and gain the nourishment of the word.—AMBROSE.

The temptation of Christ is the complement of the baptism of Christ. It is the negative preparation for His ministry, as the baptism was His positive preparation. In His baptism Christ received impulse, calling, strength: by the temptation He was made distinctly

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conscious of the errors to be shunned and the perils to be feared on the right hand and on the left. The temptation was the last act of His moral education : it gave Him an insight into all the ways in which His Messianic work could be marred.—GODET.

What happened in the desert and what happened in the garden are only parts of one great whole. What Christ shrank from at last was just what Satan tried to dissuade Him from at first. The three temptations all issued and centred in this one : to be the Messiah without suffering and death, such a Messiah as carnal Judaism then longed for.—R. D. HITCHCOCK.

To convert the hard, stony life of duty into the comfort and enjoyment of this life ; to barter, like Esau, life for pottage ; to use the Divine powers in Him only to procure bread of earth—to do homage to the majesty of wrong ; to worship evil for the sake of success ; making the world His own by force or by crooked policy, instead of suffering—to distrust God, and try impatiently some wild, sudden plan, instead of His meek and slow-appointed ways ; to cast Himself down from the temple, as we dash ourselves against our destiny : these were the temptations of His life as they are of ours. If you search through His history, you will find that all trial was reducible to one or other of these three forms. In the wilderness His soul foresaw them all ; they were all in spirit met then, fought and conquered before they came in their reality.

F. W. ROBERTSON.

Who will deem his life to consist in those things, which the Son of God held up to our contempt ?

AUGUSTINE.

THE MINISTRY

THE GALILEAN GOSPEL

*There was delivered unto him
the book of the prophet Isaiah.
And he opened the book, and
found the place where it was
written,*

*The Spirit of the Lord is
upon me. . . .*

*And he began to say unto them,
To-day hath this scripture been
fulfilled in your ears.*

Luke IV. 17-21.

IT was open to any man of reputed knowledge and piety, with the sanction of the ruler of the synagogue, to read the lessons (one from the Law and one from the Prophets), and our Lord's previous life had doubtless gained the respect of that officer. Up to this time, it would seem, He had confined Himself to reading.

Now He came to preach, after an absence possibly of some months, with the new power that had already made Him famous.

It is a natural inference from the fact that it was given to Him, that the Isaiah roll contained the prophetic lesson for the day. In the calendar of modern Jews, the lessons from Isaiah run parallel with those from Deuteronomy. The chapter which He read stands as the second lesson for the day of Atonement. We cannot prove that the existing order obtained in the time of our Lord's ministry, but everything in Judaism rests mainly on old traditions; and there is therefore nothing extravagant in the belief that it was on the day of Atonement that the great Atoner thus struck what was the key-note of His whole work.

It is a legitimate inference that the passage which Jesus thus read was one in which He wished men to see the leading idea of His ministry. Glad tidings for the poor, remission of sins, comfort for the mourners, these were what He proclaimed now.

It is obvious that we have here only the opening

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words of the sermon preached on the text from Isaiah. There must have been more than this, remembered too vaguely for record, to explain the admiration of which the next clause speaks. But this was what startled them : He had left them as the son of the carpenter—mother, brethren, sisters were still among them—and now He came back claiming to be the Christ, and to make words that had seemed to speak of a far-off glorious dream, as a living and present reality.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

Christ knew and confessed Himself to be the promised Messiah of whom Moses wrote and the prophets ; He claimed all the prerogatives and exercised all the functions of the Messiah ; He read Himself on every page of the book of God. The wonderful harmony between the Christ of prophecy and the Christ of history has at all times justly been regarded as one of the strongest proofs of His Divine character and mission. It is impossible to resolve this harmony into accident or to trace it to human divination. It is the exclusive privilege of the Divine mind to foreknow the future and to reach the end from the beginning.—SCHAFF.

We believe in prophecy fulfilled ; we see prophecy fulfilling ; we trust in the prophecies yet to be fulfilled.—AUGUSTINE.

The Gospel—what is it, but God's heart in print ? The precious promises of the Gospel—what are they but Heaven's court-rolls, translated into the creature's language ; in which are exposed to the view of our faith all the counsels and purposes of Love and Mercy, which were concluded on by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for the recovery of lost man by Jesus Christ ?

GURNALL.

He "closed the book," as if unwilling to read what followed.—J. FORD.

THE BEATITUDES

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed are ye poor : for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now : for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now : for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy : for behold, your reward is great in heaven : for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

Luke VI. 20-23.

discovery of Blessedness, was but to pronounce that no man can be called Blessed before his death ; not that they had found what kind of better Blessedness they went to, after their death, but that still, till death, they were sure every man was subject unto new miseries, and interruptions of every thing, which they could have called blessedness. The Christian philosophy goes further. It shows us a perfecter Blessedness, than they conceived, for the next life ; and it imparts that Blessedness to this life also.

DONNE.

ST. Matthew mentions Eight Beatitudes ; St. Luke only four : but “ the four,” as St. Ambrose says, “ are found in the eight, and the eight are resolved into the four.” Meekness and peaceableness are contained under the virtue of patience ; purity of heart is allied to poverty of spirit ; mercifulness belongs to hunger after righteousness. St. Luke subjoins the sentences of punishment, that the truth of the four Beatitudes may appear more forcibly from the contrast of the woes, severally opposed to them.

LUDOLPHUS.

The farthest, that any of the philosophers went, in the

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Each evangelist has placed the blessings of poverty first, for it is the first in order, and the purest, as it were, of the virtues ; for he who has despised the world shall reap an eternal reward.—AMBROSE.

Not everyone oppressed with poverty is blessed, but he who has preferred the commandment of Christ to worldly riches. For many are poor in their possessions, yet most covetous in their disposition ; these poverty does not save, but their affections condemn. For nothing involuntary deserves a blessing, because all virtue is characterised by the freedom of the will. Blessed then is the poor man as being the disciple of Christ, who endured poverty for us. For the Lord Himself has fulfilled every work which leads to happiness, leaving Himself an example for us to follow.

BASIL.

After having commanded them to embrace poverty, He then crowns with honour those things which follow from poverty. It is the lot of those who embrace poverty to be in want of the necessities of life, and scarcely to be able to get food. He does not then permit His disciples to be faint-hearted on this account, but says, *Blessed are ye who hunger now*.—CYRIL.

That is, blessed are ye who chasten your body and subject it to bondage, who in hunger and thirst give heed to the word, for then shall ye receive the fullness of heavenly joys.—BEDE.

It seems to have been St. Luke's special aim to collect as much as he could of our Lord's teaching as to the danger of riches. As a physician of the soul, he treasures up and records all our Lord's warnings against the perilous temptations that wealth brings with it.

E. H. PLUMPTRE.

THE LAMENTATIONS

But woe unto you that are rich ! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you, ye that are full now ! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you, ye that laugh now ! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you ! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets.

Luke VI. 24-26.

LET the full force of the word *consolation* be observed. It is used by way of contrast to the comfort which is promised to the Christian in the list of Beatitudes. There is something, then, very fearful in the intimation of the text, that those who have riches thereby receive their portion, such as it is, in full, instead of the heavenly gift of the Gospel.—NEWMAN.

For those who would mix in the world with safety, there is needed just the reverse of the very gifts which make men the world's favourites ; namely, gifts of caution, retirement, and silence.—MANNING.

But although in the abundance of wealth many are the allurements to crime, yet many also are the incitements to virtue. It is not those who possess riches, but those who know not how to use them, that are condemned by the authority of the heavenly sentence. It is not the money, but the heart of the possessor which is in fault.—AMBROSE.

Our Saviour speaks here, not in the character of a judge, pronouncing sentence on the guilty, but in the character of a Prophet or Teacher, divinely enlightened as to the consequences of men's actions, and impelled by His zeal for their good to give them warning.

DR. CAMPBELL.

Flattery is the nurse of sin.—BEDE.

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THE NEW COMMANDMENT

But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you. To him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other ; and from him that taketh away thy cloke withhold not thy coat also. Give to every one that asketh thee ; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

Luke VI. 27-30.

THE love of one's friends is common to all religions ; the love of one's enemies is the characteristic of Christians.

TERTULLIAN.

Blessed is he, O Lord, who loveth Thee, and who loveth his friend in Thee, his enemy because of Thee.—AUGUSTINE.

There is no difference between him that doth an injury, and him that requites it ; but only that the one is found to be wicked a little sooner than the other.—TERTULLIAN.

Be not sensitive to take anything as a personal offence to yourself ; for this is but one of the many ways in which man “disquieteth himself in vain.” All personal affronts, real or imaginary, we must make up our minds never to regard for a moment.—BENGEL.

He says not, To him that seeketh give all things, but give what you justly and honestly can, that is, what as far as man can know or believe, neither hurts you nor another : and if thou hast justly refused anyone, the justice must be declared to him (so as not to send him away empty) ; sometimes thou wilt confer even a greater boon when thou hast corrected him who seeks what he ought not.—AUGUSTINE.

Nothing is more reasonable than that we should be that to one another, which God is to us all.

WHICHCOTE.

THE GOLDEN RULE

As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

Luke VI. 31.

THIS is a law, by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted, as far as the private conscience requires to be informed—a law, of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention and purity of will. Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To find means of perplexing that universal principle, upon which every question of justice between one man and another is to be decided, they have inquired, whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there is needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measures of right, must be such as we approve; and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.—DR. JOHNSON.

It is a great advantage to have the whole of our duty collected into such narrow bounds, and presented to us at one view. . . . This also is a most convictive rule; every man that thinks a little, must immediately own that it is highly reasonable.—S. DAVIES.

Do not that to another which you would hate to be done to you.—*The Talmud*.

I shall certainly avoid doing that myself which I deem reprehensible in another.—MÆANDRIUS.

THE WIDOW'S SON

*And fear took hold on all :
and they glorified God, saying,
A great prophet is arisen
among us : and, God hath
visited his people.*

Luke VII. 16.

NOW the proof of the resurrection we learn not so much from the words as from the works of our Saviour, who, beginning His miracles with the less wonderful, reconciled our faith to far greater.

First indeed in the grievous sickness of the centurion's servant, He verged upon the power of resurrection ; afterwards with a higher power he led men to the belief in a resurrection, when He raised the widow's son, who was carried out to be buried.

GREGORY NYSSA.

Life meeting death stops the bier.—CHRYSOSTOM.

Perhaps, by touching the bier, He would show us how little dread He had for death and the grave, which are the means of His restoring us to life.—CALVIN.

None moved him on the behalf of the widow, neither do we read that she herself spake to Him ; only our Saviour's compassion was moved at the sight of her sorrow, and consideration of her loss. . . . Thereby showing us that we ought not to stay our hand from doing good when we have proper objects and opportunities before us, until we be importuned and solicited thereto.—POOLE.

In the types of the *general* Resurrection, which were *particular* resuscitations of the dead in this world, the dead were restored to the knowledge of their friends : when Christ raised the son of the widow of Nain, "*He delivered him unto his mother.*"—DONNE.

Though now the cry of nature be not heard, faith wins the answer of peace.—J. P. THOMPSON.

THE PENITENT WOMAN

Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair.

Luke VII. 44.

THE expression in our translation, being accommodated to the modern custom of sitting at meals, instead of reclining or lying down, as did the ancients, is not very intelligible, because it is impossible that Jesus could have sat at meat, and that the woman could have stood at His feet behind Him. The account, however, is perfectly clear, from knowing the custom that then subsisted of reclining during meals with the feet drawn back on the couch.

CALMET.

Tears are a deluge, and they lift up the soul.

GREGORY NAZIANZUS.

Oh, how great the gift! He turns what was assigned as a punishment into a means of salvation. Sin wrought sorrow; sorrow exhausted sin.—CHRYSOSTOM.

Many came to Christ for bodily health. But we do not read of others who came to Him for remission of sin. Thus she was a singular example of faith and love and repentance, and received a special reward.

CHR. WORDSWORTH.

It is love, according to Jesus, which gives to religion its true import. The faith of the woman proved itself genuine, because it sprang from and begat love; the love from the faith, the faith from the love. The Pharisee, whose feelings were hardened, bound up in the mechanism of the outward law, was especially lacking in the love which could lead to faith; and therefore in speaking to him, the woman's love, and not her faith, was made prominent by Christ.—NEANDER.

PETER'S CONFESSION

He said unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

Luke IX. 20.

HOW marked is *ye*! He excludes them from the other, that they may avoid their opinions; as if He said, Ye who by My decree are called to the Apostleship, the witnesses of My miracles, who do ye say that I am?—CYRIL.

In this one name there is the expression both of His divinity and incarnation, and the belief of His passion. He has therefore comprehended everything, having expressed both the nature and the name wherein is all virtue. They are then forbid to preach Him as the Son of God, that they might afterwards preach Him crucified.—AMBROSE.

It is matter of unspeakable comfort to us, that our Lord Jesus is *God's Anointed*, for then He has an unquestionable authority and ability for His undertaking; for His being *anointed* signifies His being both appointed to it, and qualified for it.

Now one would have expected that Christ should have charged His disciples, who were fully apprised and assured of this truth, to publish it to everyone they met with; no, He *straitly charged them to tell no man that thing* as yet. After His resurrection, which completed the proof of it, Peter made the temple ring of it, that *God has made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ* (Acts ii. 36). But as yet the evidence was not ready to be summed up, and therefore it must be concealed.—HENRY.

In that confession were wrapped up the truths which were to be the light of the future ages of Christendom.

DEAN STANLEY.

THE DAILY CROSS

If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self?

Luke IX. 23-25.

“**I**F any man *will*.” He does not say, whether you will or no, you must suffer this: but how? “*If any man will come after Me. I force not; I compel not; but I make everyone master of his own choice.*” He that uses compulsion, often repels; but he that leaves the hearer to choose, attracts him the more.—CHRYSOSTOM.

It is not said, “Whosoever will come after Me,” let him draw, or drag, his cross, but let him *take, bear, and receive it*. By this form of speech our Lord intimated that, wherever the cross should be found, it should be taken up from the earth, as a precious pledge, and laid on the shoulder; just as mothers bear in their arms their beloved children with exceeding delight.—HÆFTENUS.

Lord God, he who hath not gained Thee, hath lost everything.—BERNARD.

A denial of one’s self is indeed a total forgetfulness of things past, and a forsaking of his own will and affection.—BASIL.

In two ways also is the cross taken up, either when the body is afflicted through abstinence, or the mind touched by sympathy.—GREGORY.

Whosoever will according to the present life keep his own soul fixed on things of sense, the same shall lose it, never reaching to the bounds of happiness.

ORIGEN.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

As he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered . . .

HE took Peter, indeed, because He wished to show him that the witness he had borne to Him was confirmed by the witness of the Father, and that he was as it were to preside over the whole Church. He took with him James, who was to be the first of all the disciples to die for Christ ; but He took John as the clearest singer of the sacred doctrine, that having seen the glory of the Son, which submits not to time, he might sound forth, *In the beginning was the Word.*—JOHN DAMASCENE.

To make it plain that He was not an enemy of God, and transgressor of the law, He showed these two standing by Him ; (for else, Moses the lawgiver, and Elias who was zealous for the glory of God, had not stood by Him,) but also to give testimony to the virtues of the men. For each had oftentimes exposed himself to death in keeping the Divine commands. He wishes also His disciples to imitate them in the government of the people, that they might be indeed meek like Moses, and zealous like Elias. He introduces them also to set forth the glory of His cross, to console Peter and the others who feared His Passion.—CHRYSOSTOM.

Hence He ascends the mountain to pray and be transfigured, to show that those who expect the fruit of the resurrection, and desire to see the King in His glory, ought to have the dwelling-place of their hearts on high, and be ever on their knees in prayer.—BEDE.

The Transfiguration is an earnest in hand of a glory hereafter to be revealed.—TRENCH.

In His Transfiguration we have a most exact pattern of our resurrection.—MUSCULUS.

TO THE HOLY CITY

LEADING THE WAY

When the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem . . .

Luke IX. 51.

LITERALLY, *When the days of His assumption were being fulfilled.* The noun is peculiar to St. Luke, and is derived from the verb used of the Ascension. It can here

refer to nothing else, and the passage, as occurring in the midst of a narrative, is remarkable. It is as though St. Luke looked on all that follows as seen in the light of the Ascension.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

The expression is full and strong, that the time was come, and the days were fulfilled ; and which was true in the sense hinted at, that now the time was up that Jesus must leave the lowlands of Galilee, having finished His work there, and go into the higher country of Judæa, and so up to Jerusalem. It is observable that after this, He never went into Galilee any more.

“He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,” or “strengthened His face,” as the Vulgate and Ethiopic Versions render it ; set His face “like a flint,” as in Isa. l. 7, denoting not impudence, as hardening of the face is used in Prov. xxi. 29, but boldness, courage, constancy, and firmness of mind : and though He knew what He was to meet with and endure ; that He should bear the sins of His people, the curse of the law, and wrath of God ; that He should have many enemies, men and devils to grapple with, and undergo a painful, shameful, and accursed death ; yet none of these things moved Him. He was resolutely bent on going thither, and accordingly prepared for His journey.—GILL.

THE ZEALOUS DISCIPLES

When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? But he turned, and rebuked them.

Luke IX. 54-55.

THE words admit of two constructions: that the disciples did not know that the Spirit that had been given "not by measure" to their Master, and promised by Him to them, was one of gentleness and love; that they did not know that in yielding to what they thought a righteous anger, they were really yielding themselves to the evil mind, or the personal Evil Spirit which was at enmity with God. Looking to the general use of the word "spirit" in our Lord's teaching, the former way of taking the words seems, on the whole, preferable, and agrees better with what follows. The Spirit which had claimed them for its own was one that led Him to save and not to destroy.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

It is the glory of the Christian religion, that it hath conquered the world, and triumphed over all that opposed it, without any other weapon but its own victorious beauty and reasonableness. . . . By its own native light it vanquished the ignorance and prejudice of the world, and by pure dint of reason subdued men's minds to its empire. Religion presseth no man to her service, and disdains to have any followers but volunteers.

J. SCOTT.

The fire of zeal should be sustained with the oil of mercy.—THOMAS AQUINAS.

Our zeal must be kindled with pure fire from God's altar; that it may rather warm, than burn; enliven rather, than enflame.—WHICHCOTE.

TO THE HOLY CITY

THE DOUBTFUL DISCIPLES

*I will follow thee, Lord ; but
first suffer me to bid farewell
to them that are at my house.*

Luke IX. 61.

HE who divides his pursuits, draws down his affections ; he who divides his care, delays his advances.

We must first set about the things which are most important.—AMBROSE.

We are then hereby taught that it becomes us not to spend even the slightest portion of our time in vain, although we have a thousand things to compel us, nay to prefer spiritual things to even our greatest necessities. For the devil watchfully presses close upon us, wishing to find any opening, and if he causes a slight negligence, he ends in producing a great weakness.—CHRYSTOSTOM.

He puts his hand to the plough who is ambitious to follow, yet looks back again who seeks an excuse for delay in returning home, and consulting with his friends.—CYRIL.

As if he said to him, The East calls thee, and thou turnest to the West.—AUGUSTINE.

Considering the life of mortification and self-denial which Christ and His disciples led, it is surprising to find that anyone should voluntarily offer to be His disciple. But there is such an attractive influence in *truth*, and such a persuasive eloquence in the consistent steady conduct of a righteous man, that the *first* must have *admirers*, and the *latter imitators*. Christianity, as it is generally exhibited, has little attractive in it ; and it is no wonder that the cross of Christ is not prized, as the blessings of it are not known ; and they can be known and exhibited by him only who follows Christ *fully*.—A. CLARKE.

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THE MISSION OF THE SEVENTY

After these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to come. And he said unto them, The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few . . .

Luke X. 1-2.

IT is well that Luke has given us also the sending of *the Twelve*—or we should have had some of the commentators asserting that this was *the same* mission. The discourse addressed to the Seventy is in substance the same as that to the Twelve, as the similarity of their errand would lead us to suppose it would be.

But there is, as Stier has well remarked, this weighty difference. The discourse in Matt. x. in its three great divisions speaks plainly of an office founded, and a ministry appointed, which was to involve a work, and embrace consequences, *co-extensive*, both in space and duration, *with the world*. Here, we have *no such prospective view* unfolded. The whole discourse is confined to the *first division* there, and relates entirely to *present duties*. Their sending out was not to prove and strengthen their own faith, as Hase supposes, but to prepare the way for this solemn journey of the Lord, the object of which was the announcement of the near approach of the kingdom of God—and the termination of it, the last events at Jerusalem.—ALFORD.

They were thus sent for mutual assistance, and the more certain testimony of their miracles. Thus two disciples were sent by the Baptist to Christ, and thus Barnabas and Paul were sent by the Church.—GROTIUS.

A brother assisted by a brother is as a fortified city.—ANON.

TO THE HOLY CITY

A CERTAIN LAWYER

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

Luke X. 25-28.

perfection of Divine grace. The love of God, then, is the first and chief command; but the second, as filling up the first and filled up by it, bids us to love our neighbour. Hence it follows, *And thy neighbour as thyself*. But we have an instinct given us by God to perform this command, as who does not know that man is a kind and social animal? For nothing belongs so much to our nature as to communicate with one another, and mutually to need and love our relations. Of those things then of which in the first place He gave us the seed, He afterwards requires the fruits.—BASIL.

The love of God is a constant stream; not a torrent, but a current, that runs all our lifetime, but runs still and smoothly.—TRAPP.

IF anyone ask how the love of God is to be obtained, we are sure that the love of God cannot be taught. For neither did we learn to rejoice in the presence of light, or to embrace life, or to love our parents and children; much less were we taught the love of God, but a certain seed-like principle was implanted in us, which has within itself the cause, that man clings to God; which principle the teaching of the Divine commands is wont to cultivate diligently, to foster watchfully, and to carry on to the per-

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour ?

Luke X. 29.

THE lawyer, when praised by our Saviour for having answered right, breaks forth into pride, thinking that he had no neighbour, as though there was no one to be compared to him in righteousness. Hence it is said, *But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour ?* For somehow first one sin and then another takes him captive. From the cunning with which he sought to tempt Christ, he falls into pride.—CYRIL.

Now our Saviour defines a neighbour not in respect of actions or honour, but of nature ; as if He says, Think not that because thou art righteous thou hast no neighbour, for all who partake of the same nature are thy neighbours. Be thou also their neighbour, not in place, but in affection and solicitude.—THEOPHYLACT.

By the Priest and the Levite, two times are represented, namely, of the Law and the Prophets. By the Priest the Law is signified, by which the priesthood and sacrifices were appointed ; by the Levites the prophecies of the Prophets, in whose times the law of mankind could not heal. A Samaritan coming by, far removed by birth, took compassion on him ; in whom our Lord Jesus Christ would have Himself typified,

AUGUSTINE.

Why dost thou wound my wounds, O thou that
passest by,

Handling and turning them with an unwounding eye ?

CRAWSHAW.

'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,
But support him after.—SHAKESPEARE.

TO THE HOLY CITY

As if He said, If thou seest anyone oppressed, say not, Surely he is wicked ; but be he Gentile or Jew and need help, dispute not ; he has a claim to thy assistance, into whatever evil he has fallen. The inn is the Church, which receives travellers, who are tired with their journey through the world, and oppressed with the load of their sins ; where the wearied traveller casting down the burden of his sins is relieved, and after being refreshed is restored with wholesome food. And this is what is here said, *and took care of him*. For without is everything that is conflicting, hurtful, and evil, while within the inn is contained all rest and health.—CHRYSOSTOM.

You are required to *take care* ; it is not required of you to heal.—BERNARD.

He that *fell among thieves*, and was almost killed by the way, was not going *up* to Jerusalem, but *down to Jericho* ; from the Temple, I warrant you ; and, as St. Augustine speaks, “ if he had not been sinking and going downwards ” from God and from His Church, “ he had not fallen into the hands of thieves.”—LAUD.

There are some who utterly proscribe the name of *chance*, as a word of impious and profane signification ; and indeed, if it be taken by us in that sense, in which it was used by the heathen, so as to make anything casual, in respect of God Himself, their exception ought justly to be admitted. But to say a thing is a *chance*, or casualty, as it relates to second causes, is not profaneness, but a great truth, as signifying no more than that there are some events, besides the knowledge, purpose, expectation, and power of second agents. And for this very reason, because they are so, it is the royal prerogative of God Himself, to have all these uneven, fickle uncertainties under His disposal.—SOUTH.

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MARTHA AND MARY

She had a sister called Mary, which also sat at the Lord's feet, and heard his word.

Luke X. 39.

OUR Lord does not then forbid hospitality, but the troubling about many things, that is to say, hurry and anxiety. And mark the wisdom of our Lord, in that at first He said nothing to Martha, but when she sought to tear away her sister from hearing, then the Lord took occasion to reprove her. For hospitality is ever honoured as long as it keeps us to necessary things. But when it begins to hinder us from attending to what is of more importance, then it is plain that the hearing of the Divine word is the more honourable.—THEOPHYLACT.

Now as was her humility in sitting at His feet, so much the more did she receive from Him. For the waters pour down to the lowest part of the valley, but flow away from the rising of the hill. What then? Must we think that blame was cast upon the service of Martha, who was engaged in the cares of hospitality, and rejoiced in having so great a guest? If this be true, let men give up ministering to the needy; in a word, let them be at leisure, intent only upon getting wholesome knowledge, taking no care what stranger is in the village in want of bread; let works of mercy be unheeded, knowledge only be cultivated. Our Lord then does not blame the actions, but distinguishes between the duties. For it follows, *Mary hath chosen that good part*, etc. Not thine a bad one, but hers a better.

AUGUSTINE.

Let not the care of ministering to others turn thy mind from the knowledge of the heavenly word.

AMBROSE.

TO THE HOLY CITY

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Father, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins ; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation.

Luke XI. 2-4.

IT seems, according to the Evangelist Matthew, that the Lord's Prayer contains seven petitions, but Luke has comprehended it in five. Nor in truth does the one disagree from the other, but the latter has suggested by his brevity how those seven are to be understood.—AUGUSTINE.

Now perhaps some think it unfit for saints to seek from God bodily goods, and for this reason assign to these words a spiritual sense. But granting that the chief concern of the saints should be to obtain spiritual gifts, still it becomes them to see that they seek without blame, according to our Lord's command, their common bread.—CYRIL.

We make only one petition about things of sense, that the present life may not trouble us.—CHRYSOSTOM.

We forget that we are to *learn* to pray ; and that prayer is to be learnt, as all other things, by frequency, constancy, and perseverance.—LAW.

How many duties are at once discharged !—the honouring of God in the *Father*, the testimony of faith in the *Name*, the offering of obedience in the *will*, the remembrance of hope in the *kingdom*, the petition for life in the *bread*, the confession of *debts* in the prayer to *forgive*, the anxious care about *temptations* in the call for defence.—TERTULLIAN.

Bread that is daily new.—TRAPP.

IMPORTUNATE PRAYER

And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him; and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee? I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him as many as he needeth.

Luke XI. 5-8.

Him, and that you may know what the gift of God is, and may anxiously guard what is given. For whatever a man acquires with much pains he strives to keep safe, lest with the loss of that he should lose his labour likewise.—BASIL.

In the case of God, no time is unseasonable with respect to hearing and giving.—BENGEL.

We prevail with men by importunity because they are displeased with it, but with God because He is pleased with it.—HENRY.

THE Saviour had before taught, in answer to the request of His apostles, how men ought to pray. But it might happen that those who had received this wholesome teaching, poured forth their prayers indeed according to the form given to them, but carelessly and languidly, and then when they were not heard in the first or second prayer, left off praying. That this then might not be our case, He shows by means of a parable, that cowardice in our prayers is hurtful, but it is of great advantage to have patience in them.—CYRIL.

For perhaps He delays purposely, to redouble your earnestness and coming to

TO THE HOLY CITY

COVETOUSNESS

One out of the multitude said unto him, Master, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me.

Luke XII. 13.

THE man was evidently *not a disciple*, nor preparing to be one, but *some hearer in the crowd*, whose mind had been working in him during our Lord's last sayings about the care of Providence for His friends, and he thought this was *just the care his circumstances wanted*; being, as appears, oppressed by his brother in the matter of his patrimony. Possibly too he had an idea that the Messiah or the great Rabbi to whom he was listening, was come to set all things right;—and with that feeling which we all have of the surpassing injustice of *our own* wrongs, broke out with this inopportune request.—ALFORD.

Therefore is this brother deservedly disappointed who desired to occupy the steward of heavenly things with corruptible, seeing that between brothers no judge should intervene, but natural affection should be the umpire to divide the patrimony, although immortality not riches should be the patrimony which men should wait for.—AMBROSE.

He gave not what the man asked; nor yet did He decline to give him anything. He refused the less, and gave something greater. The man asked—what? The division of the inheritance. The Lord gave—what? The prohibition against covetousness. Whether, then, did He dismiss His petitioner empty; or rather did He not fill him with truth?—AUGUSTINE.

We rarely find Christ meddling with any of these plump commands, but it was to open them out, and lift his hearers from the letter to the spirit.—R. L. S.

THE STUDY BIBLE

CONTENTMENT

A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Luke XII. 15.

THIS is true, whether we understand by "life" the subsisting or upholding of our life, or (as "life" is often taken) for the happiness and felicity of our lives. Abundance is not necessary to uphold our lives. Nature, saith Seneca, is content with a little. Nor doth the happiness of life lie in the abundance of what we possess. Some philosophers determined rightly, that something of this world's good is necessary to our happiness of life, but abundance is not.—POOLE.

Man's life is of God, not of his goods, however abundant they may be.—ALFORD.

Life is well lived on little, if there be contentment and the grace of God.—BENGEL.

It is not to be thought that a great abundance of outward goods is necessary to happiness, for no man can ever think that a competency requires superfluity. And it is evident, that a man, without being lord of sea or land, may act the honourable and worthy part in life ; and that those in moderate circumstances have it in their power to regulate their manners according to the principles of virtue ; and we see, in fact, that men in private stations are not less attentive to moral propriety than those in authority, nay, that they are more so. Now this is enough. For the happy life, according to the essential idea and notion of it, is the life of one acting upon the principles and maxims of virtue.—ARISTOTLE.

He better claims the glorious name, who knows
With wisdom to enjoy what heaven bestows.

HORACE.

TO THE HOLY CITY

CONSIDER THE LILIES

*Consider the lilies, how they
grow . . .*

Luke XII. 27.

IT is probable that "lilies" should be taken as a general term, for in the next sentence it is covered by the more general expression—the grass of the field; and it is certain that among the floral treasures of Palestine none could more forcibly recall the royal scarlet of Solomon's robes than the richly-coloured velvet-like flower of the anemone.—CARRUTHERS.

The highest voice ever heard on this earth said withal, "Consider the lilies of the field: they toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." A glance, that, into the deepest deep of Beauty. "The lilies of the field"—dressed finer than earthly princes, springing up there in the humble furrow-field; a beautiful *eye* looking out on you from the great inner sea of Beauty! How could the rude earth make these, if her Essence, rugged as she looks and is, were not inwardly Beauty?—CARLYLE.

Almost all Christ's moral precepts might be paralleled or illustrated by something in Hebrew or Jewish literature. This praise of the beauty of flowers cannot, apparently, be so paralleled. And it helps Christians to approximate to a realisation of the spiritual altitude of Christ's conception of beauty and glory in the moral world.—E. A. ABBOTT.

There are times when I cannot rest in the ethical, when I cannot find any satisfaction in historical facts. The very Evangel satisfies me not. I cannot read my Bible, and I cannot pray. But I go into my garden to consider the lilies, how they grow. They seem to preach—carking care, away!—J. DUNCAN.

THE STUDY BIBLE

THE STRAIT GATE

Strive to enter in by the narrow door . . .

Luke XIII. 24.

WHETHER the question, which called forth this reply from our Lord, was a captious one, or not (though the latter is the more probable opinion), certain it is that it was a disputed one in the Jewish schools ; some maintaining universal salvation, others limiting it to a few elect. Now to a question of such minor importance as this (for it rather concerns us, as Grotius observes, to know what sort of person will be saved, than how few), our Lord, agreeably to His custom of never answering questions of mere curiosity, was pleased to return no answer ; but makes His words an answer to the question, which ought rather to have been asked, namely, "How salvation is to be attained." The sense of our Lord's reply is—Strive every nerve.—BLOOMFIELD.

For as in earthly life the departure from right is exceeding broad, so he who goes out of the path which leads to the kingdom of heaven, finds himself in a vast extent of error. But the right way is narrow, the slightest turning aside being full of danger, whether to the right or to the left, as on a bridge, where he who slips on either side is thrown into the river.—BASIL.

Though the way of salvation is narrow at its entrance, yet through it we come into a large space, but on the contrary the broad way leadeth to destruction.

CHRYSOSTOM.

Now when He was about to speak of the entrance of the narrow gate, He said first, *strive*, for unless the mind struggles manfully, the wave of the world is not overcome, by which the soul is ever thrown back again into the deep.—GREGORY.

TO THE HOLY CITY

MAKING EXCUSES

*They all with one consent
began to make excuse.*

Luke XIV. 18.

THE excuse is not that which indicates a scornful rejection of the invitation ; it is the language rather of those who neglect or are indifferent to the invitation which is given them.

And the source of this indifference is not a hardened heart, wilfully bent upon refusing the mercy of God ; not a determination to sin ; it is the deadening effect of lawful possession of the good things of this life that is pointed out.

One had bought a piece of ground and must needs go and see it. This is all that man of the largest possessions can do ; he cannot retain them. He can but see what holds him in slavery ; he cannot himself hold it. He must leave it behind him at last.

Another has bought five yoke of oxen, but he has not yet proved them ; without having first proved the reality of the worldly possessions, he barter heaven for them.

In the third refusal domestic comfort and ease are the hindrance. Home and friendship weave their own web of entanglement around a man.

What Christ teaches us is this, that there is nothing so trifling, so innocent, or even laudable, in itself, not even the gifts of God, but may be perverted in our use of it, and be made the means which shall harden the heart of man against God, and in the end exclude him from the happiness which God has prepared for them that love and obey Him.—DENTON.

These are excused themselves out of heaven, by bringing apologies why they could not go there.

TRAPP.

THE LOST SHEEP

What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it ?

Luke XV. 4.

THE case of a sinner that goes on in sinful ways, is like a *lost sheep* ; a sheep *gone astray* ; *lost* to God, who has not the honour and service He should have from him ; *lost* to the flock, that has not communion with him ; *lost* to himself, he knows not where he is, wanders endlessly, is continually exposed to the beasts of prey, subject to frights and terrors, from under the shepherd's care, and wanting the green pastures ; and it cannot of itself find the way back to the fold.

The God of heaven *continues* His care of the sheep that did not go astray, they are *safe in the wilderness* ; but there is a particular care to be taken of this lost sheep ; and though He has a hundred sheep, a considerable flock, yet He will not *lose* that *one* ; but He goes after it, and shows abundance of care in *finding it out* ; He follows it, inquiring after it, and looking about for it, until He *finds* it ; in *bringing it home* ; though He finds it *weary*, and perhaps *worried* and worn away with its wanderings, and not able to bear being driven home, yet He doth not leave it to perish, and say, it is not worth carrying home ; but *lays it on His shoulders*, and with a great deal of tenderness and labour brings it to the fold.

And he *calls his friends and neighbours*, the shepherds that keep their flocks about him, *saying, Rejoice with me* ; perhaps among the pastoral songs which the shepherds used to sing, there was one for such an occasion as this.—HENRY.

THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER

What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a lamp, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it?

Luke XV. 8.

THE main lesson of this parable is, of course, identical with that of the Lost Sheep. We are justified, however, in assuming that the special features of each were meant to have a special meaning, and that we have therefore more than a mere ornamental variation of imagery.

We note the use of the silver coin (the *drachma*) as a symbol of the human soul. Here the reason of the choice lies on the surface. The coin is what it is because it has on it the king's image and superscription. Man is precious because he too has the image and superscription of the great King, the spiritual attributes of Thought and Will, by which he resembles God, stamped upon him.

There is, perhaps, a special significance in the fact that the coin is lost *in* the house, while the sheep strays *from* the fold. What seems implied here is the possibility that a soul that is precious in the sight of God may be lost even within the society, Israel or the Church of Christ, which is for the time being the visible house of God.

It is a woman who seeks, and not a man. We must at least see in it the lesson that what we call feminine virtues and graces are needed for the deliverance of souls that have fallen—patience, and diligence, and minute observation—not less than what we think of as the more manly qualities of courage, and enterprise, and endurance.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

THE PRODIGAL SON

It was meet to make merry and be glad : for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again ; and was lost, and is found.

Luke XV. 32.

THE prodigal came home between hope and fear ; fear of being rejected and hope of being received ; but his father was not only better to him than his fears, but better to him than his hopes.

He came home in rags, and his father not only clothed him but adorned him. He said to the servants, who all attended their master upon notice that his son had come, " Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." He calls not for a coat, but for a robe, the garment of princes and great men, the best robe—there is a double emphasis, that principal robe, and the robe he wore before he began his ramble. Bring hither that robe and put it on him ; he may think it ill becomes him, but put it on him and do not offer it him only. Put a ring on his hand, a signet ring, with the arms of the family, in token of his being owned as a branch of the family. He came home barefoot, his feet perhaps sore with travel, therefore put shoes on his feet to make him easy. Thus does the grace of God provide for true penitents, so that they shall go cheerfully and with resolution in the way.

There was great joy and rejoicing at his return, and observe, it was the father that began the joy, and set all the rest on rejoicing, except the elder brother. He would not go in except his brother be turned out. Methinks the mercy and grace of our God in Christ shines almost as bright in His gentle and tender bearing with this peevish saint as before in his reception of the prodigal sinner.—HENRY.



"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight. . ."—S. Luke xv. 21.

TO THE HOLY CITY

THE UNJUST STEWARD

*Render the account of thy
stewardship . . .*

Luke XVI. 2.

IS there not a simple and natural explanation of this parable, an explanation completely and obviously consistent with the purity and directness of Christ's teaching, without straining the meaning of the story or limiting the application of it?

Why should it be assumed that in reducing the bills of the debtors he was robbing his lord? The more likely explanation is that these bills did not represent the amounts rightly owing to his master, but that they represented his master's charges plus his own heavy and unlawful percentages of profit. Consequently what the dismissed steward did was, not to rob further his master as most writers imagine, but to write off the bills his own illegal profit, so that when the bills were paid his master would receive just what was rightly due to him. He corrected the bills, so that they faithfully represented the just debts. Whatever may have been the motive behind his action, he appeared as an honest man and a faithful steward, perhaps for the first time in the history of his stewardship.

On this interpretation there is no difficulty in the words, "The lord commended the unjust steward." An honourable master would appreciate a return to honesty in a dishonest servant, and would deservedly praise the appearance of a new standard of conduct in him. With this in mind it is not necessary to stress the distinction between the master in the parable and our Lord, as those do who hold that the master of the steward commended him for his cunning fraud.

BORROWBY.

THE STUDY BIBLE

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

Luke XVI. 19-31. **T**HIS is an historical parable, and a parabolical history. Some such persons there were, and some such things were really done; but some other things were figuratively and parabolically added.—DONNE.

When once it is understood that Lazarus is but a symbol for ample, urgent, inescapable opportunity, it is seen to be the obvious implication that Dives is one who neglects his opportunities.—A. B. BRUCE.

A smooth and easy life, an uninterrupted enjoyment of the goods of Providence, full meals, soft raiment, well-furnished homes, the pleasures of sense, the feeling of security, the consciousness of wealth,—these, and the like, if we are not careful, choke up all the avenues of the soul, through which the light and breath of heaven might get to us.—NEWMAN.

The epitome of the parable is that, "Charity begins at home," by doing the work which awaits us at our own door.—H. G. MORTIMER.

The awfulness of this parable lies very much in the fact that the principal personage in it is by no means what we should be inclined to call a wicked man. No vice, no immorality, no fraudulence, no avowed hostility to religion—nothing of the kind is laid to his charge. He is simply a man of the world. He had lived for this life and this life alone. The future had never really entered into his calculations. And when he passed at death into the mysterious, spiritual, unseen kingdom, he was totally unprepared for it, and completely out of harmony with it.—G. CALTHROP.

We are saved by faithful hearing, not by ghosts.—BENGEL.

TO THE HOLY CITY

THE KINGDOM WITHIN

The kingdom of God cometh not with observation : neither shall they say, Lo, here ! or, There ! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you.

Luke XVII. 20.

HOW great a blessing is it, at all times, but especially in an age like this, that the tokens of Christ are not only without us, but more properly *within us* ! I say, in this age especially, because it is an age in which the outward signs of Christ's Presence have well-nigh deserted us. . . . Since, then, in this our age, He has in judgment obscured the visible and public notes of His Kingdom among us, what a mercy is it to us, that He has not deprived us of such, as are personal and private ! . . . Who among us may not, if he will, lead such a life, as to have those secret and truer tokens to rest his faith on ; so as to be sure, and certain, and convinced, that the Church, which baptised us, has still the Presence of Christ, and therefore is within the bounds of His Kingdom, and is the gate to His eternal favour ?—NEWMAN.

Every man hath a *kingdom* within himself. Reason, as the Princess, dwells in the highest and inwardest room ; the senses are the guards and attendants on the Court, without whose aid nothing is admitted into the Presence ; the supreme faculties, as will, memory, etc., are the Peers ; the outward parts and inward affections are the Commons ; violent passions are rebels to disturb the common peace.—BP. HALL.

Perhaps the Kingdom of God being within us, means that joy that is implanted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. For that is, as it were, the image and pledge of the everlasting joy with which in the world to come the souls of the saints rejoice.—GREGORY NYSSA.

PRAYER

He spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint . . .

Luke XVIII. 1.

HE who hath redeemed thee, hath shown thee what He would have thee do. He would have thee be instant in prayer, He would have thee ponder in thy heart the blessings thou art praying for, He would have thee ask and receive what His goodness is longing to impart. He never refuses His blessings to them that pray, but rather stirs men up by His mercy not to faint in praying. Gladly accept the Lord's encouragement : be willing to do what He commands, not to do what He forbids. Lastly, consider what a blessed privilege is granted thee, to talk with God in thy prayers, and make known to Him all thy wants, while He though not in words, yet by His mercy, answers thee. He tires not but when thou art silent.—CHRYSOSTOM.

Longing desire prayeth always, though the tongue be silent. If thou art ever longing, thou art ever praying. When stayeth prayer ?—when desire groweth cold.

AUGUSTINE.

To pray always, and to speak but little, is one of the paradoxes of the Gospel : this duty requires little of the tongue, much of the heart. A man may be justly said always to pray, when he has God always present to his mind, and always desiring Him.—QUESNEL.

Men must needs pray always, if they would escape the things coming on the earth. It is not so much the duty or suitableness, as the absolute necessity of persevering prayer that is here declared.—TRENCH.

Though blunt and broken in language, let our prayers be pointed and persevering.—TRAPP.

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

He spake also this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought . . .

Luke XVIII. 9

THIS parable represents to us two chariots on the racecourse, each with two charioteers in it. In one of the chariots it places righteousness with pride, in the other

sin and humility. You see the chariot of sin outstrip that of righteousness, not by its own strength but by the excellence of humility combined with it, but the other is defeated not by righteousness, but by the weight and swelling of pride. For as humility by its own elasticity rises above the weight of pride, and leaping up reaches to God, so pride by its great weight easily depresses righteousness. This inflation of pride can cast down even from heaven the man that taketh not warning, but humility can raise a man up from the lowest depth of guilt. It saved the Publican before the Pharisee, and brought the thief into Paradise before the Apostles. But if humility though added to sin has made such rapid advances, as to pass by pride united to righteousness, how much swifter will be its course when you add to it righteousness. We should avoid the Pharisee's pride, but not neglect his performances; we should forsake the publican's sins, and retain his humility.—CHRYSOSTOM.

Two went to pray ! O, rather say
 One went to brag, th' other to pray :
 One stands up close and treads on high,
 Where th' other dares not send his eye ;
 One nearer to God's altar trod,
 The other to the altar's God.—CRASHAW.

ZACCHÆUS

*He (Zacchæus) sought to see
Jesus who he was . . .*

Luke XIX. 3.

BEING forgetful of his own dignity and estate, *running before*, as a man of mean condition, he might easily divine that all which should see this thing would scoff at him; that he, a chief and rich man, should climb a tree like boys, whence he might see Christ passing by. But his love and desire of seeing Jesus, and especially an impulse of the Holy Ghost, took away all his modesty from him. . . . *To-day I must abide in thine house*—a wonderful thing! We read in the Gospel that the Lord being invited by others went to them, but we never read that of His own accord He came to their feast, as He did to this Prince of the Publicans: so faith always obtained more than it wished. Zacchæus desired to *see* Jesus; now he hath Him his guest. Christ requires *haste*, that His readiness to bestow faith may appear to all.—LEIGH.

The truth of conversion will evidence itself in the ordering and reforming of our personal calling. Religion is not a matter merely of public and common profession, dwells not in churches and temples only, but it will enter into thine house, bids itself home to thee, as Christ did to Zacchæus, *Come, I must lodge in thine house*, have access and sway in all thine employments. 'The Law of God was to be written upon the posts of thine own doors.—BROWNRIG.

When we begin to seek God, we become conscious that God is seeking us. It is at that period that we distinguish the voice of personal invitation—"Zacchæus!" It is then that the Eternal Presence makes its abode with us.—F. W. ROBERTSON.

TO THE HOLY CITY

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

As he was now drawing nigh, even at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen ; saying, Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord : peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said, I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.

Luke XIX. 37-40.

THERE are two notes of that journey to Jerusalem—the Kingdom of God and the imminent cross, Royalty and Death.—J. KELMAN.

Christ is not called King as one who exacts tribute, or arms His forces with the sword, or visibly crushes His enemies, but because He rules men's minds, and brings them believing, hoping, and loving into the Kingdom of heaven. For He was willing to be King of Israel, to show His compassion, not to increase His power. But because Christ appeared in the flesh, as the redemption and light of the whole world, well do

both the heaven and earth, each in their turn, chaunt His praises. When He is born into the world, the heavenly hosts sing ; when He is about to return to heaven, men send back their note of praise.—BEDE.

If you look upon our Blessed Saviour preparing for His Passion, it seems His only and most pleasing design. As He came into the world for that end, so His life before it was but a prologue to it. He came in triumph to Jerusalem, with songs and joy about Him ; as if Death were the only pleasant thing, and His Passion so desirable, that He would go ride to meet it ; which He never did at any other time.—ALLESTREE.

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Not in any of our accounts of the asses of the East is there a single example of an ass being ridden by a king, or even a distinguished officer, on any state occasion ; whereas here it is expressly “ in His royal capacity ” that the prophet says Jerusalem’s King is to ride upon an ass. Into the same city which David and Solomon had so frequently entered on mules or horses richly caparisoned, and with a company of proud horsemen as their attendants, the Lord rode on a borrowed ass.—HENGSTENBERG.

It was the meekness of majesty which was thus manifested, entering the city with royal authority, yet waiving, during His humbled state, all the external grandeur that should yet accompany that authority.

The joy with which Jesus was welcomed on this occasion into Jerusalem was all the more striking a fulfilment of prophecy, that it was far from being that intelligent, deep, and exultant welcome which the prophetic Spirit would have had Zion give to her King.

DAVID BROWN.

The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it (Hab. ii. 11).

The very walls, the very walls of this senate house, I say, are eager to return you thanks.—CICERO.

Lord, here

Thou hast a temple too, and full as dear
As that of Sion ; and as full of sin ;

 If our stiff tongues shall be
Mute in the praise of Thy deity,
The stones out of the temple-wall
Shall cry aloud and call
Hosanna ! and Thy glorious footstep greet.

J. TAYLOR.

TO THE HOLY CITY

THE CITY OF GOD

*When he drew nigh, he saw
the city and wept over it . . .*

Luke XIX. 41.

BEHOLD the compassionate King, amidst the very shouts of joy raised by His disciples !—BENGEL.

What a history of Divine love and human ingratitude lay before Him ! When He grieved, it was for the hardness of men's hearts ; when He wept, in Bethany and here, it was over the fruits of sin.—ALFORD.

This, and the tears over the grave of Lazarus, are the only recorded instances of our Lord's tears. It is significant that in the one case they flow from the intensity of personal friendship, in the other from that of the intense love of country which we know as patriotism. Neither element of character could well be wanting in the perfect pattern of a holiness truly human.

E. H. PLUMPTRE.

Christ here proves His twofold nature by weeping as man for what He foretold as God.

CHR. WORDSWORTH.

No one will ever uplift his fellow-men from within, or leave a name which draws tears of reverence from generations yet unborn, who has not himself, as it were, wept over Jerusalem, and felt a stirring kinship with even the outcast of mankind.—F. W. H. MYERS.

It was the sadness of the city that affected Him. To every profoundly religious and philanthropic nature, the sadness of city life is more impressive than its splendour. No tender-hearted man who has seen the hidden darkness of city life can again for some time fling himself careless and heedless into its joys.

J. G. GREENHOUGH.

THE RULERS' QUESTION

*By what authority doest thou
these things ?*

Luke XX. 2.

THESE controversial discourses are very especially genuine portions, because they are held so entirely in the spirit and tone of the contemporaneous Rabbinical dialectics.—STRAUSS.

The Arabic version reads, "this thing," as if the Sanhedrin only referred to His preaching the Gospel ; but the Persic version reads, "all these things" ; not only preaching, but working miracles, and particularly driving the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, which especially affect them, they losing the rents thereby.—GILL.

There was no principle more firmly established by universal consent than that authoritative teaching required previous authorisation.—EDERSHEIM.

But the rulers who should have been struck with wonder at one who taught such heavenly doctrines, and have been convinced by His words and deeds that this was the same Christ whom the Prophets had foretold, came to hinder Him, so helping onward the destruction of the people. As if He said : By the law of Moses, those only who are sprung from the blood of Levi have authority to teach, and power over the sacred buildings. But Thou who art of the line of Judah usurpest the offices assigned to us. Whereas, O Pharisee, if thou hadst known the Scriptures, thou wouldest have called to mind that this is the Priest after the order of Melchisedec, who offers to God them that believe on Him by that worship which is above the law Why then art thou troubled ?—EUSEBIUS.

TO THE HOLY CITY

PATIENCE

*In your patience ye shall win
your souls.*

Luke XXI. 19.

“**I**N or by your patience acquire ye (*or ye shall acquire*) your souls.” That is to say, patience and constancy would be the element in which they would be able to save their souls.—KAY.

He who preserves patience in adversity, is thereby rendered proof against all affliction, and so by conquering himself, he gains the government of himself; as it follows, *In your patience shall ye possess your souls*. For what is it to possess your souls, but to live perfectly in all things, and sitting as it were upon the citadel of virtue to hold in subjection every motion of the mind? By patience then we possess our souls, because when we are said to govern ourselves, we begin to possess that very thing which we are. But for this reason, the possession of the soul is laid in the virtue of patience, because patience is the root and guardian of all virtues. Now patience is to endure calmly the evils which are inflicted by others, and also to have no feeling of indignation against him who inflicts them.—GREGORY.

Whosoever is out of patience is out of possession of his soul.—LORD BACON.

Whatever falls out, that may be apt to ruffle and discompose you, do but pause awhile, and give yourselves time to recollect your thoughts, and consider whence it comes, whither it tends, and how much good may be designed you in it; and you will soon see what infinite cause you have to submit patiently to it. If the disciples were *impatient* under anything that happened, they could not keep their souls in a right temper and disposition for His service.—BEVERIDGE.

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WATCH AND PRAY

Watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Luke XXI. 36.

THE command of the New Testament, *Watch that ye may be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man*, put into other words, what is it? It is this: "So live, as to be worthy of that high and true ideal of man and of man's life, which shall be at last victorious." All the future is there.—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Christ says, *Watch and pray*. Herein lies your cure. To watch and to pray are surely in your power, and by these means we are certain of getting strength. You feel your weakness; you fear to be overcome by temptation; then keep out of the way of it: this is watching. Avoid society which is likely to mislead you; flee from the very shadow of evil: you cannot be too careful: better be a little too strict, than a little too easy; it is the safer side. Abstain from reading books which are dangerous to you. Turn from bad thoughts when they arise; set about some business, begin conversing with some friend, or, say to yourself the Lord's Prayer with seriousness and reverence. When you are urged by temptation, whether it be the threats of the world, false shame, self-interest, provoking conduct on the part of others, or the world's sinful pleasures—urged to be cowardly or covetous, or angry, or sensual—think on Christ's precious Blood-shedding. Do not dare to say, you cannot help sinning. A little attention to these points will go far, through God's grace, to keep you in the right way. And, again, *pray*, as well as *watch*.—NEWMAN.

THE PASSION

THE LAST SUPPER

He said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer . . .

Luke XXII. 15.

THE last meal one is to partake of with his family or friends before his departure even for a far-distant land, in all probability never to see them again, is a solemn and fond one to any thoughtful and loving person. The last meal of a martyr of Jesus with his friends in the truth, before being led forth to execution, is still more touching. But faint are these illustrations of the emotions with which Jesus now sat down to supper with the Twelve.

All the sweetness and all the sadness of His social intercourse with them, from the day that He first chose them to be with Him, were now to be concentrated and heightened to their utmost intensity during the brief hour or two of this their last meal together. But this was no common meal, nor even common passover. It was to be the point of transition between two divine economies and their respective festivals ; the one to close for ever, the other to run its majestic career through all time, until from a terrestrial form it should dissolve into a form celestial.—DAVID BROWN.

He had desired for the sake of the disciples, to whom He wished now at last to manifest Himself more openly in His very act of bidding them farewell ; He had desired it for His own sake also, because He was about to enter into His glory.—BENGEL.

As then our Saviour desired with desire to eat of this Passover, so ought we to prepare our minds by meditation and prayer to desire so great a gift, and long to be present at so great a feast.—NATALIS.

THE STUDY BIBLE

THE PASSOVER

Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Luke XXII. 16.

THE Passover of which Christ will partake, after having fulfilled the type, is the Christian Eucharist, in which

He joins with the faithful in the Kingdom of God on earth. Others suppose the reference to be to the spiritual banquet in the world to come.

The Intern. Crit. Comm.

Our Lord was now about to give a spiritual consummation or fulfilment to the Paschal rites of eating and drinking, by changing them into a Sacrament of the New Covenant in the Gospel and the Church, in the Holy Communion of His Body and Blood. Henceforth the Levitical sacrifice was to cease, being transfigured into an Evangelical Sacrament in the Kingdom of God.—CHR. WORDSWORTH.

Here the word “fulfilled” presents a new depth of meaning. The “Passover” was fulfilled in the Kingdom of God: (1) in the sacrifice on the cross; (2) in every commemoration of that sacrifice by the acts which He appointed. Every such act was one of Communion, not only of the disciples with each other, but with Him, and in it He is, as it were, joining in the feast with them. Hereafter, as in the promise of “I will sup with him, and he with Me,” there will be a yet fuller consummation.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

The Passover was held as a sign, not so much of the deliverance from the destroying angel, as from the Egyptian bondage. The real Passover, or passage from corruption to incorruption in heaven, commences by a transit from natural to spiritual here on earth.—GROTIUS.

THE CUP

*He received a cup, and when
he had given thanks . . .*

Luke XXII. 17.

THIS most important addition in our narrative amounts, I believe, to a solemn declaration of the *fulfilment of*

the Passover rite, in both its usual divisions—the eating the flesh of the lamb and drinking the cup of thanksgiving. Henceforward, He who fulfilled the Law for man will no more eat and drink of it. I remark this, in order further to observe that *this division of the cup* is not only not *identical with*, but has *no reference to*, the subsequent one in ver. 20. That was the *institution of a new rite*;—this the *abrogation of an old one*, now fulfilled, or about to be so, in the person of the true Lamb of God. This is generally supposed to have been the *first cup* in the Passover-meal, with which the whole was introduced.—ALFORD.

The usual Blessing of the cup was :

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, the King of the World, who hast created the fruit of the vine ; blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, the King of the World, who hath chosen us above all people, and hath exalted us above every tongue, and hath sanctified us by Thy commandments ; and Thou hast given us, O Lord our God, in love, the stated festivals for joy, and the feasts and seasons for rejoicing : this day of the feast of unleavened bread, this time of our freedom, a holy convocation, in remembrance of the going out of Egypt ; for Thou hast chosen us, and Thou hast sanctified us above all people ; and the feasts of Thine holiness with joy and rejoicing Thou hast made us to inherit ; blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, who hath kept us alive, and preserved us, and hast brought us to this time.—GILL.

THE BREAD

He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you : this do in remembrance of me.

Luke XXII. 19.

IT is observable that in the record of all the three Evangelists and St. Paul, our Lord uses the present tense. This is My Body which is "being given," "being broken." This is My Blood which is "being shed."—CHR. WORDSWORTH.

The proposal to give these words, "this do," a sacrificial meaning, and translate them, "offer this, sacrifice this, offer this sacrifice," cannot be maintained.

Inter. Crit. Comm.

The fact that our Lord and His disciples had been eating of a sacrifice which was also a memorial gives a special force to the words here used. In time to come, they were to remember Him as having given Himself, sacrificed Himself, for them, and this was to be the memorial in which memory was to express itself, and by which it was to be quickened.

E. H. PLUMPTRE.

Now, it is beyond doubt that "covenant" is the fundamental idea. But let it be observed that "testament" or "will" is the proper classical sense of the Greek word. . . . The one (meaning) runs into the other, not by any criticism on the word, but by reflecting on the thing. If it be true that by "covenant," or eternal Divine arrangement, all the blessings of salvation become the rightful possession of believers solely in virtue of Christ's death, does not this almost irresistibly suggest to every reflecting mind the idea of a testator's death as a most true and exalted conception of the virtue of it? While that of "covenant" is confessedly

the fundamental one, that of "testament" is accessory or illustrative only.—DAVID BROWN.

"This is My Body," which is common to all the accounts, appears so unambiguous and simple an expression, that it is hard to recognise in it the occasion and the subject of the most protracted and exciting controversy that has rent the Church within the last thousand years. That controversy is so purely theological that it has scarcely any basis in the exposition of the text; the only word (the verb *is*) upon which it could fasten being one which in Aramaic would not be expressed, and therefore belongs merely to the Greek translation of our Saviour's language. (It is unlikely He spoke in Aramaic.) Until the strong unguarded figures of the early Fathers had been petrified into a dogma, at first by popular misapprehension, and at last by theological perversion, these words suggested no idea but the one which they still convey to every plain unbiassed reader, that our Saviour calls the bread His Body in the same sense that He calls Himself a door, a vine, a root, a star, and is described by many other metaphors in Scripture. The bread was an emblem of His flesh, as wounded for the sins of men, and as administered for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.—ALEXANDER.

He Himself breaks the bread which He holds forth, to show that the breaking of His Body, that is, His Passion, will not be without His will.—BEDE.

With all certainty or persuasion let us partake of it as of the Body and Blood of Christ; for under the type of bread His Body is given to thee, and under the type of wine His Blood is given to thee, that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, thou mayest be of one body and blood with Him.—ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM.

LORDSHIP AND SERVICE

And there arose also a contention among them, which of them is accounted to be greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them ; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors. But ye shall not be so : but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger ; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth ? is not he that sitteth at meat ? but I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.

Luke XXII. 24-27.

WHEREFORE ye are not to look for at My hands such preferment as kings of nations are wont to bestow upon their attendants—*With you not so.* Your reward in heaven shall be most ample ; on earth your chiefest honou must be to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake ; submission, humility, and meekness are things fitter for you, to inure your minds withal, than their aspiring cogitations : if any amongst you be greater than other, let him show himself greatest in being lowliest ; let him be above them in being under them, even as a servant, for their good. These

are affections, which you must put on. As for degrees of preferment and honour in this world, if ye expect any such thing at My hands, ye deceive yourselves ; your portion is rather the clear contrary.—HOOKER.

Humility was a plant little known among the ancients, and first grew to perfection, violet-like, in the retired and shady hills of Judæa.—ANON.

Those mines that are richest, are deepest ; those stars that are highest, seem smallest ; the goodliest buildings have the lowest foundations : the more the fruit, the lower the branch on which it grows. Pride is ever the companion of emptiness.—BP. REYNOLDS.

SIMON PETER

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not . . .

Luke XXII. 31-32.

FOR albeit thou art for a time shaken, yet thou holdest stored up a seed of faith; though the spirit has shed its leaves in temptation, yet the root is firm. Satan then seeks to harm thee, because he is envious of My love for thee, but notwithstanding that I have prayed for thee, thou shalt fall.

THEOPHYLACT.

Rightly he followed afar off, for he could never have denied if he had clung close to Christ. But herein must he be revered, that he forsook not our Lord, even though he was afraid.—AMBROSE.

Many a time had he heard this bird, and was no whit moved with the noise; now there was a bird in his bosom, that crowed louder than this, whose shrill accent, conjoined with this, astonished the guilty disciple. . . . This cock did but crow like others; neither made or knew any difference of this tone and the rest; there was a Divine hand that ordered this morning's note to be a summons of penitence.—BP. HALL.

Let those who have not yet fallen, hear this, lest they fall; and let those who are down, hear, that they may arise. We have not, in this case of St. Peter, an example of falling, but rather of rising up again from a fall.—AUGUSTINE.

When the devil found Peter on his ground (in the company of Christ's enemies) he gets him into his sieve of temptation, and shakes him so sorely therein to and fro, till he had like to have made chaff of him, had not Christ prayed for him.—CHR. NESS.

THE SON OF MAN

*Father, if thou be willing,
remove this cup from me :
nevertheless not my will, but
thine, be done.*

Luke XXII. 42.

MANY are shocked at this place who turn the sorrows of the Saviour to an argument of inherent weakness from the beginning, rather than taken upon Him for the time. But I am so far from considering it a thing to be excused, that I never more admire His mercy and majesty ; for He would have conferred less upon me had He not taken upon Him my feelings. For He took upon Him my sorrow, that upon me He might bestow His joy. With confidence therefore I name His sadness, because I preach His cross. He must needs then have undergone affliction, that He might conquer. For they have no praise of fortitude whose wounds have produced stupor rather than pain. He wished therefore to instruct us how we should conquer death, and what is far greater, the anguish of coming death. Thou smartedst then, O Lord, not from thy own, but my wounds. And perhaps He is sad, because that after Adam's fall the passage by which we must depart from this world was such that death was necessary. Nor is it far from the truth that He was sad for His persecutors, who He knew would suffer punishment for their wicked sacrilege.—AMBROSE.

He has expressed also the conflict of our mind in itself, as death approaches, for we suffer a certain thrill of terror and dread, when by the dissolution of the flesh we draw near to the eternal judgment ; and with good reason, for the soul finds in a moment that which can never be changed.—GREGORY.

We men, conceived and born in sin, have an impure

hard flesh, that is not quick to feel. The fresher, the sounder the man, the more he feels what is contrary to him. Because now, Christ's body was pure and without sin, and our body impure, therefore we scarcely feel the terrors of death in two degrees, where Christ felt them in ten.—LUTHER.

Or He begs the cup to be removed from Him, not indeed from fear of suffering, but from His compassion for the first people, lest they should have to drink the cup first drunk by Him.—BEDE.

As respects the severity of His suffering, we can nowhere gain a juster conception of it than here; Gethsemane opens to us the understanding of Calvary; for we now know that the elevated nature of His person, instead of making the burden of His suffering less oppressive for Him, on the contrary increases this in terrible wise.

The necessity of His sacrifice becomes clear to us if we give heed to this: that the Father even after such a prayer, does not let the cup pass by for His beloved Son.

The completeness of the redemption brought in by Him is convincingly established for us when we see to how high a degree His obedience and His love raised Him; and the crown which this combatant there gained in the strife is to us so dear, for the reason that we know that He through this suffering has become the merciful High-priest, who can have compassion on our weakness.—J. J. VAN OSTERZEE.

How should we have known these evils so formidable, if Thou hadst not, in half a thought, inclined to deprecate them? How could we have avoided so formidable and deadly evils, if Thou hadst not willingly undergone them? We acknowledge Thine holy fear, we adore Thy Divine fortitude.—BP. HALL.

JUDAS

*Then Satan entered into
Judas . . .*

Luke XXII. 3.

*Judas, betrayest thou the Son
of man with a kiss?*

Luke XXII. 48.

SATAN entered into Judas not by force, but finding the door open. Forgetful of all that he had seen, Judas now turned his thoughts solely to covetousness.—TITUS BOST.

Now many shudder at the wickedness of Judas, yet do not guard against it. For whosoever despises the laws of truth and love, betrays Christ, who is truth and love. Above all, when he sins not from infirmity or ignorance, but after the likeness of Judas seeks opportunity, when no one is present, to change truth for a lie, virtue for crime.—BEDE.

At first Satan came, to make the heart of Judas his own; now he *enters*, because it is his own.—BP. HALL.

None of His most intimate disciples and friends had ever kissed the Lord. The traitor alone dared to profane with impure lips the face of the Lord. This unprecedented act matched well with his unprecedented treachery. The traitor abuses the highest token of love with the highest degree of presumption.—BENGEL.

The first three Gospels all record the traitor's kiss. St. Luke alone reports the question. In our Lord's use of the words "the Son of Man," we may trace a twofold purpose. It was the old familiar title by which He had been wont to speak of Himself in converse with the disciples, and so it appealed to memory and conscience. It was the name which was specially connected with His office as Judge and King, and so it came as a warning of the terrible retribution which the traitor was preparing for himself.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

THE PASSION

It must be used, I think, by way of question, as if he arrests the traitor with a lover's affection.—AMBROSE.

He gives him his proper name, which was rather like one lamenting and recalling him, than one provoked to anger.—CHRYSOSTOM.

He says, *Betrayest thou with a kiss?* that is, Dost thou inflict a wound with the pledge of love? with the instruments of peace dost thou impose death? a slave, dost thou betray thy Lord; a disciple, thy master; one chosen, Him who chose thee?—AMBROSE.

He said not, "Betrayest thou thy Master, thy Lord, thy Benefactor," but *the Son of Man*, that is, the humble and meek, who though He were not thy Master and Lord, forasmuch as He has borne Himself so gently towards thee, should have never been betrayed by thee.

CHRYSOSTOM.

Judas, dost thou betray Me with a kiss?

Canst thou find hell about My lips, and miss

Of life just at the gates of life and bliss?

GEO. HERBERT.

For a little silver, and that not paid, but only promised, Judas sold his friend; yea, that which is worse, his Master; yea, that which is worst of all, his Maker.—DEAN BOYS.

Judas was called to be an apostle of Jesus; but his call is a mystery so deep that no philosophy can fathom it. Not so his end. It gave a powerful testimony to the perfect innocence of Jesus. Nor this only; it gave as strong a confirmation of the religion of Jesus as the life of St. Paul himself.—DWIGHT.

God is said to will in the way of permission that which in the way of approbation He does not will.

AUGUSTINE.

MALCHUS

One of them smote the servant of the high priest, and struck off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

Luke XXII. 50-51.

THIS verse is peculiar to St. Luke. *Suffer Me thus far*, I understand, as addressed, not to the disciples, but to the multitude, or rather to those who were holding Him. His hands were held ; and He says, " Suffer, permit

Me thus far " ; that is, to touch the ear of the wounded person. If this interpretation be correct, it furnishes an additional token of the truthfulness of our narrative ; for the previous laying hold of Jesus has not been mentioned here, but in Matthew and Mark.—ALFORD.

Well, Peter, dost thou wield thy active sword ;

Well for thyselfe, I meane, not for thy Lord,

To strike at ears is to take heed there bee

No witness, Peter, of thy perjury.—R. CRASHAW.

As, in the apprehending of our Blessed Saviour, all the Evangelists record that Peter cut off Malchus's ear, but only Luke remembers the *healing* of it again (I think, because that act of curing was most present and obvious to his consideration, who was a physician), so he was, therefore, most apt to remember this prayer of Christ, which is the physic and *balsamum* of our soul, and must be applied to us all (for we do all crucify Him, and *we know not what we do*). There St. Jerome gave a right character of him in his Epistle to Paulinus, as he was a physician, so all his words are physic for a languishing soul.—DONNE.

For the Lord is never forgetful of His loving-kindness. While they are bringing death upon the righteous, He heals the wounds of His persecutors.—BEDE.

PETER'S REPENTANCE

The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.

Luke XXII. 61.

THE glance which was thus the turning-point of Peter's life is mentioned only by St. Luke. As he was sitting in the porch, our Lord must have looked on the disciple as He was being led from Annas to the more public trial before the Sanhedrin. The form in which the fact is narrated, "*the Lord turned*," points, probably, as in other instances, to its having been gathered by St. Luke from his informants at a time when that mode of naming Him had become habitual; and possibly in answer to inquiries, natural in one who sought to analyse the motives that led to action, as to what had brought about the change that led Peter, as in a moment, from the curses of denial to the tears of penitence.

E. H. PLUMPTRE.

Christ *looked upon Peter*, not doubting but that Peter would soon be aware of it, for He knew that though he had denied Him with his lips, yet his eye would still be towards Him. Though Peter had now been guilty of a very great offence, and which was very provoking, yet Christ would not *call to him*, lest He should *shame* him or *expose* him, only gave him a *look*, which none but Peter would understand the meaning of, and it had a great deal in it. Peter said he did not *know Christ*, Christ *turned and looked upon him*, as if he should say, Dost thou not know Me, Peter? Look Me in the face and tell me so.—HENRY.

Jesus vouchsafed a look of love towards Peter, even while He was concerned Himself in the great trial of His own life.—CHR. NESS.

PILATE

And Pilate said unto the chief priests and the multitudes, I find no fault in this man.

Luke XXIII. 4.

THE style of the Gospel is admirable in a thousand different views; and in this, amongst others, that we meet there with no invectives, on the part of the historians, against Judas, or Pilate, nor against any of the enemies, or the very murderers, of their Lord.—PASCAL.

It was God that opened the mouth of this blind heathen to make this just and due vindication of Jesus, at such a time when the devil had opened the mouths of the Jews and their priests to pour out their foul invectives against Him.

Though Pilate said, “Hearest Thou not what these say?” yet Christ, hearing well enough, answered nothing. He answered nothing because He would not hinder the work of Redemption, which He had then in hand.—CHR. NESS.

It is dangerous to seek for *expedients*, when we should do our *duty*.—BP. WILSON.

Pilate was weak—morally weak. He was not a man delighting in sin for its own sake—it may be doubted whether such men are anywhere to be found—but one of a class of persons to be seen every day and on every hand—men who sin in spite of their better selves. His weakness appears in his condemning Jesus against his inclination, when he believed Him innocent.—LIDDON.

Pilate therefore lenient and easy, yet wanting in firmness for the truth, because afraid of being accused.

THEOPHYLACT.

He was bribed by political ambition.—BEECHER.

HEROD

When Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad : for he was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard concerning him ; and he hoped to see some miracle done by him.

Luke XXIII. 8.

ONE would apprehend that Herod was in that most fearful state, into which persons sometimes fall, when they have had their feelings once excited on the subject of religion, but still kept their vices, and who still continued to entertain an interest and curiosity in matters of religion, having lost godly fear.

IS. WILLIAMS.

So does Thy wisdom, O Lord, disappoint the curious ; and so they bear themselves, when disappointed : they seek not to see Thee to save their souls, but to gratify their curiosity ; and, if their humour be crossed, grow proud and insolent. O glorious Jesus, whose clear and perfect Vision is our only felicity, make Thou our whole lives here to be nothing else, but a long and earnest desire to see Thee ; that, when we see Thee, our joy may be full.—AUSTIN.

Many desire to see Jesus, not for Jesus' sake, but for some sinister by-respects, for profit or pleasure, as Herod did here. Many, as he, would see the works of Christ, but love not to hear the words of Christ.

CHR. NESS.

What a caricature this prince's conceptions were of this First among his subjects, although Jesus had moved his whole land with His Spirit, notwithstanding that the Baptist (whom he had beheaded) had lived near him and made on him an impression of the spirit of the prophets.—LANGE.

It outherods Herod.—SHAKESPEARE.

JESUS

Pilate spake unto them again, desiring to release Jesus ; but they shouted, saying, Crucify, crucify him.

Luke XXIII. 20-21.

IT was a wonderful providence of God that Pilate should in these his contrary actings, of absolving and condemning Christ, serve God's will (as well as his own). In his absolving Christ so often he concurred with the Revealed Will of God which declareth Him faultless and without sin, a lamb without blemish and without spot ; in his condemning Him Pilate served the Secret Will of God, which laid upon Christ all the sins of the world, according to the Covenant of Redemption contracted between the Father and the Son, for the satisfaction and expiation of all our sins.

It is marvellous encouragement to our weak faith that our Lord Christ, before He was condemned, should be : (a) So often absolved from all deservings of any death, that thereby we might escape the manifold deaths, which we have so well and so justly deserved. It was necessary that the innocency of Jesus should by all ways and means be vindicated and testified both by Pilate often, and by his wife once, that the believing soul might the more manifestly discern that He was not condemned, nor executed for His own sins, but for ours.

(b) That He was condemned for blasphemy, which is the sum of all sins against the First Table of the Law, before the Ecclesiastical Court, and for sedition and treason, which is the sum of all sins against the Second Table, before the Civil Court, and so prevent our arraignment and condemnation before the dreadful Tribunal and Justice Seat of the great God.—CHR. NESS.

SIMON THE CYRENIAN

(*They*) laid on him the cross,
to bear it after Jesus.

Luke XXIII. 26.

THEY compel Simon of
Cyrene to bear the small
end of the cross after Jesus,
if not the whole. 'Tis easier

to suppose, that by this time our Lord must faint under the burden, His agony in the Garden, His being tossed to and fro, and taunted all night by the soldiers, one while before Caiaphas, and another while before Pilate, His scourges, buffets, etc., must needs spend Him very much. Now He is no longer able to bear the cross. None of the multitude, for shame, would help Him. The death of the cross was so abhorred of all, no Jew would touch it, no, nor this Simon until he was compelled to do so. Coming fresh out of the field or country, they laid hold of him and put the low end upon him, not so much for the easing of a fainting Christ, as to hasten the execution, and keep Him alive until He came to it.—CHR. NESS.

Hadst thou done this out of choice, which thou didst out of constraint, how I should have envied thee, O Simon of Cyrene, as too happy in the honour to be the first man that bore that cross of thy Saviour, wherein millions of blessed martyrs have, since that time, been ambitious to succeed thee? Thus to bear Thy cross for Thee, O Saviour, was more than to bear a crown for Thee. Could I be worthy to be thus graced by Thee, I should pity all other glories.—BP. HALL.

Many persons seem to bear a cross *before* Jesus, making their afflictions the ground of their future hope; and many bear a cross alone, *without* Jesus, unsustained by faith and the consolations of the Gospel. We must humbly bear the cross *after* Jesus.—J. FORD.

CALVARY

When they came unto the place which is called The skull, there they crucified him . . .

Luke XXIII. 33.

TO the north of the city, on the right of the road that goes out by the Damascus Gate, there is a low, rocky hill which the Palestine Exploration, General Gordon, and others have identified as the genuine Golgotha.—ADENEY.

As often as we crucify criminals, the most noted ways are chosen, where most may behold, and most may be moved with fear.—QUINTILIAN.

As a matter of translation, it would clearly have been better either to give the Greek form (*cranion*), or its meaning (= "skull") in English. The Vulgate, however, had given *Calvarium*, and that word had taken so strong a hold on men's minds, that it was apparently thought better, as in all the English versions, to retain it here. It is not without interest to note that the name which more than any other is associated with Protestant hymns and meditations on the atonement, should come to us from the Vulgate of the Latin Church.

The cross employed in capital punishment varied in its form, being sometimes simply a stake on which the sufferer was impaled, sometimes consisting of two pieces of timber put together in the form of a T or an X (as in what we know as the St. Andrew's cross); sometimes in that familiar to us in Christian art as the Latin cross. In this instance, the fact that the title or superscription was placed over our Lord's head implies that the last was the kind of cross employed. In carrying the sentence of crucifixion into effect, the cross was laid on the ground, the condemned man stripped and laid upon it. Sometimes he was simply tied; some-

times, as here, nails driven through the hands and feet ; sometimes a projecting ledge was put for the feet to rest on ; sometimes the whole weight of the body hung upon the limbs that were thus secured.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

The cross is primarily and above all things at enmity with itself. The cross is the conflict of two hostile lines, of irreconcilable direction. That silent thing up there is essentially a collision, a crash, a struggle. . . . The very shape of it is a contradiction in terms.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

All He asked of mankind was the wherewithal to save them—a cross whereon to die.—LAMMENNAIS.

The Passion of Jesus Christ is rather an amazement, an astonishment, an ecstasy, a consternation, than an instruction.—DONNE.

Behold the wounds of Him who hangeth ; the blood of Him who dieth ; the price at which He redeemeth thee ! His head bent down to kiss thee ; His heart open to love thee ; His arms stretched out wide to embrace thee ; His whole body laid out to redeem thee. Consider how great things are these ; weigh them in the balance of thine heart, that He may be fixed whole in thine heart, who for thee was fixed whole upon the cross.

AUGUSTINE.

The Word of God, wishing to show that the instrument which He used for the salvation of men was superior to death, exposed His mortal body to death to manifest His nature, then after a little rescued it from death by the force of His Divine power. This is indeed the first cause of Christ's death. But the second is the manifestation of the Divine power of Christ inhabiting a body. For seeing that men of old deified those who were destined to a like end with themselves, and whom they called Heroes and Gods, He taught that

THE STUDY BIBLE

He alone of the dead must be acknowledged the true God, who having vanquished death is adorned with the rewards of victory, having trodden death under His feet. The third reason is, that a victim must be slain for the whole race of mankind, which being offered, the whole power of the evil spirits was destroyed, and every error put to silence. There is also another cause of the health-giving death, that the disciples with secret faith might behold the resurrection after death. Whereunto they were taught to lift up their own hopes, that despising death they might embark cheerfully in the conflict with error.—EUSEBIUS.

Now, our Lord being truly the Saviour, wished not by saving Himself, but by saving His creatures, to be acknowledged the Saviour. For neither is a physician by healing himself known to be a physician, unless he also gives proof of his skill towards the sick. So the Lord being the Saviour had no need of salvation, nor by descending from the cross did He wish to be acknowledged the Saviour, but by dying. For truly a much greater salvation does the death of the Saviour bring to men, than the descent from the cross.—ATHANASIUS.

If Christ, when He was reproached, had come down from the cross, giving place to those who insulted over Him, where had the virtue of patience been? He rather awaited His own time, endured reproaches, put up with mockings, maintained a perfect patience; and He who refused to *come down from the cross* came up from the grave; and that was a greater matter—to arise from the grave than to descend from the Cross; to destroy death by rising than to save life by descending.

GREGORY.

The cross is not in our view simply a testimony of the Father's love, like the flowers under our feet,

THE PASSION

and the starry heavens above our heads ; but the altar of the great sacrifice which restores man to God and God to man.—PRESSENSE.

In the cross is found health, in the cross life, in the cross a protection from our enemies, in the cross an infusion of the sweets of heaven, in the cross strength of soul, in the cross the joy of the spirit, in the cross the sum of virtue, in the cross the perfection of holiness. There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of eternal life, but in the cross.

Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the royal way of the holy cross.—A KEMPIS.

What is the breadth of Christ's cross ? It is as broad as the whole world ; for He died for the whole world, as it is written, " He is a propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world." And that is the breadth of Christ's cross. And what is the length of Christ's cross ? The length thereof, says an old Father, signifies the time during which its virtue will last. How long, then, is the cross of Christ ? Long enough to last through all time. As long as there is a sinner to be saved—as long as there is ignorance, sorrow, pain, death, or anything else which is contrary to God and hurtful to man in the universe of God—so long will Christ's cross last. And that is the length of the cross of Christ. And how high is Christ's cross ? As high as the highest heaven, and the throne of God, and the bosom of the Father—that bosom out of which, too, can proceed all created things. Ay, as high as the highest heaven ; for if you will receive it, when Christ hung upon the cross, heaven came down on earth, and earth ascended into heaven.—CHARLES KINGSLEY.

God hath proposed the Death of Christ for our *use*

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in this world ; and we think to enjoy it. God would have us do it over again ; and we think it enough to know that Christ hath done it already. God would have us write it ; and we do only read it. God would have us practise the Death of Christ ; and we do but understand it. The fruition of the Death of Christ is reserved for the next life ; to this life belongs the *use* of it, to “ fulfil His sufferings in our bodies ” by bearing the afflictions and tribulations of this life. Christ set up the victorious trophy of His cross Himself ; and then He delivered it over to His martyrs to do, as He had done. Nor are they only His martyrs who have actually died for Him ; but into the signification of that name, which means a witness, fall all those who have glorified Him in a patient and constant bearing of the afflictions and tribulations of this life. All being guilty of Christ’s Death, there lies an obligation on us all to fulfil His sufferings.—DONNE.

It is the death of the Eternal Word of God made flesh which is our great lesson how to think and how to speak of this world. His cross has put its due value upon everything which we see, upon all fortunes, all advantages, all ranks, all dignities, all pleasures ; upon the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. It has set a price upon the excitements, the rivalries, the hopes, the fears, the desires, the efforts, the triumphs of mortal man. It has given a meaning to the various, shifting course, the trials, the temptations, the sufferings of his earthly state. It has brought together and made consistent all that seemed discordant and aimless. It has taught us how to live, how to use this world, what to expect, what to desire, what to hope. It is the tone into which all the strains of this world’s music are ultimately to be resolved.—NEWMAN.

THE PENITENT THIEF

And he said, Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom. And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

Luke XXIII. 42-43.

THERE is something singularly touching in the trust implied in the form of the appeal. He asks for no special boon, no place on the right hand or on the left ; no room in the King's palace. He is content not to be forgotten,

certain that if the King remember him at all, it will be with thoughts of tenderness and pity.

The answer to the penitent's prayer was, in part, a contrast to it, in part, its most complete fulfilment. Not in the far-off "Coming," but that very day ; not "remembered" only, but in closest companionship ; not in the tumult and battle which his thoughts had connected with the Kingdom, but in the fair garden, with its green lawns and still waters, its trees of Knowledge and of Life. No picture could meet the cravings of the tortured robber more completely than that ; none, probably, could be more different from his expectations. Yet the "paradise" of Eastern lands was essentially the kingly garden, that of which the palace was the centre. The promise implied that the penitent should enter at once into the highest joy of the Kingdom.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

He believed not only that our Lord would rise again, but that He would rise and reign. This he believed when he saw Him wounded, bleeding, crucified.

AUGUSTINE.

We can neither desire our salvation, nor grieve for our perdition, so much as He does for us.

FRA THOMÉ DE JESU.

THE STUDY BIBLE

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHÆA

This man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

Luke XXIII. 52.

OF Joseph we are told by St. Mark that he was “an honourable counsellor,” i.e. a member of the Sanhedrin, and that he was looking for the kingdom of God ; by St. Luke that he was “a good man, and a just” ; by St. John that he was “a disciple, but secretly for fear of the Jews.” He was apparently a man of the same class and type of character as Nicodemus, respecting our Lord as a man, admiring Him as a teacher, half-believing in Him as the Christ, and yet, till now, shrinking from confessing Him before men.

For us the name has the interest of being one of the few New Testament names connected with our own country. He was sent, it was said, by Philip (the Apostle) to Britain. There, in the legend which mediæval chroniclers delighted to tell, he founded the Church of Glastonbury ; and the staff which he stuck into the ground took root and brought forth leaves and flowers, and became the parent of all the Glastonbury thorns from that day to this.

Joseph would seem to have hastened at once to the Prætorium, and asked Pilate’s permission to inter the body.

All the first three Gospels dwell on the fact of the tomb not being, as so many graves were, a natural cavern, but cut, and, as St. Luke’s word implies, to some extent, smoothed and polished. Like almost all Eastern graves, it was an opening made in the vertical face of the rock. St. John notes the singularly interesting fact that Nicodemus shared with him in these reverential offices.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

THE RESURRECTION

THE RISEN LORD

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel: and as they were affrighted, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen . . .

Luke XXIV. 1-6.

HAPPY stone, at whose removal not only was the sepulchre unclosed, but our hearts were opened to believe.

PETER CHRYSOLOGUS.

Why seek ye Him, who not merely has returned to life, but is altogether the Living One (who is the Life itself—*Olshausen*) in the state and condition of the dead?

BENGEL.

This title, "*The Lord Jesus*," is very pertinent and suitable to His Resurrection. For, however this glorious name was due to Him, even from His birth, yet, it is observable, it is never completely and fully given to Him till after His Resurrection. "*Lord*" He is called, and "*Jesus*" He is called, before; but in all the Gospel you never meet with these, all in one appellation, till His Resurrection. The first place that names Him the "*Lord Jesus*" is here. After His rising again, it is said, *they found not the body of the Lord Jesus*. There it begins; never afore: but, then, after, frequently. By His Resurrection He was "declared to be the Son of God"; then made known to be "*Lord and Christ*." Then this beautiful wreath was put upon His head and publicly proclaimed—*The Lord Jesus Christ*.

BP. BROWNRIG.

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For woman, who was once the minister of death, is now the first to receive and tell the awful mystery of the Resurrection. The female race has obtained therefore both deliverance from reproach, and the withdrawal of the curse.—CYRIL.

The empty tomb of Christ has been the cradle of the Church.—PRESSENSÉ.

The Resurrection itself is not described. Like all beginnings, whether in nature or in history, it is hidden from view.—A. PLUMMER.

At the empty tomb of Jesus Faith plants her foot firmly on the soil of earth, and then presently she raises her head to the heights of heaven. If Christ have indeed risen, then the redemption on Calvary, then the life beyond the grave, then the unassailable sanctity of the perfect man, then the coming triumph of goodness over evil, are indisputable, are certain.—H. P. LIDDON.

There are those who come seeking Jesus, but who seek Him, the living one, among the dead. That is, they would fain “know Christ after the flesh”—the Man Christ Jesus, instead of the risen Christ their Lord and their God. Who would fain go on clinging, as the disciples did, to His humanity alone. But in this sense He is not here—He is risen. And faith is called upon to accept great mysteries.—J. B. C. MURPHY.

If your thoughts of Christ practically end with His Crucifixion and Burial, your faith in Him will have no origin, your joy no fervour or passion, and you will know very little of the Christian Redemption.

R. W. DALE.

Receive every day as a resurrection from death, as a new enjoyment of life ; meet every rising sun with such sentiments of God’s goodness, as if you had seen it, and all things, new created on your account ; and, under

THE RESURRECTION

the sense of so great a blessing, let your joyful heart praise and magnify the Lord.—LAW.

Thousands and tens of thousands have gone through it (the evidence of the Resurrection) piece by piece, as carefully as ever judge summed up on a most important cause. I have myself done it many times over, not to persuade others, but to satisfy myself. I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer.—DR. ARNOLD.

O blessed day of the Resurrection, which of old time was called the Queen of Festivals, and raised among Christians an anxious, nay contentious diligence duly to honour it ! Blessed day, once only passed in sorrow, when the Lord actually rose, and the disciples believed not ; but ever since a day of joy to the faith and love of the Church ! In ancient times Christians all over the world began it with a morning salutation. Each man said to his neighbour, " Christ is risen " ; and his neighbour answered him, " Christ is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." Even to Simon, the coward disciple who denied Him thrice, Christ is risen ; even to us, who long ago vowed to obey Him, and have yet so often denied Him before men, so often taken part with sin, and followed the world, when Christ called us another way.—NEWMAN.

Here where our Lord once laid His head,
Now the grave lies buried.—CRAWSHAW.

It promised us an Eternal day, and did consecrate unto us the Lord's day.—AUGUSTINE.

THE RESURRECTION OF HOPE

But Peter arose, and ran unto the tomb ; and stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths by themselves ; and he departed to his home, wondering at that which was come to pass.

Luke XXIV. 12.

THE daring, resolute Peter, on the contrary, went directly into the sepulchre. Although at this time Peter had not as yet obtained immediately from the Lord the pardon of his grievous sin, yet, so steadfast was his faith in Christ's pardoning love, that not for a moment would he acknowledge himself to be excluded from his Lord. When in the sepulchre he perceived not the slightest trace of hurry or disorder, but found everything so carefully regulated, then arose his real faith in the Lord's Resurrection.—OLSHAUSEN.

Dr. Arnold of Rugby, finding that one of his children had been greatly shocked and overcome by the first sight of death, tenderly endeavoured to remove the feeling which had been awakened, and opening a Bible pointed to the words : " Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." Nothing, he said, to his mind, afforded us such comfort, when shrinking from the outward accompaniments of death—the grave, the grave-clothes, the loneliness—as the thought that all these had been round our Lord Himself ; round Him who died and is now alive for evermore.—STANLEY.

Evidently, the Lord had not been *taken away* out of the sepulchre, but had *gone forth* out of it.—BESSER.

THE RESURRECTION

THE REVELATION THROUGH HOPE

*The Lord is risen indeed, and
hath appeared to Simon.*

Luke XXIV. 34.

IT seems that our Lord appeared to Peter first of all those whom the four Evangelists and the Apostle mention.—BEDE.

For He did not show Himself to all at the same time, in order that He might sow the seeds of faith. For he who had first seen and was sure, told it to the rest. Afterwards the word going forth prepared the mind of the hearer for the sight, and therefore He appeared first to him who was of all the most worthy and faithful. For He had need of the most faithful soul to first receive this sight, that it might be least disturbed by the unexpected appearance. And therefore He is first seen by Peter, that he who first confessed Christ should first deserve to see His Resurrection, and also because he had denied Him He wished to see him first, to console him, lest he despair.—CHRYSOSTOM.

Chased hither and thither by fear and hope, Peter had probably wandered around the city in solitude. Perhaps he had just come back from a visit to the sepulchre, and is asking himself whether, even if the Master is again in life, there is hope that he shall see Him; when this supreme privilege becomes his portion. What took place between him and the Master has remained a holy secret between both, which even his fellow-apostles have not sought to inquire into, but have rather respected.—J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE.

Before He met the others to speak peace, He hastened to meet Peter to speak pardon.—ANON.

THE STUDY BIBLE

THE RESURRECTION OF LOVE

It came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

Luke XXIV. 15-16.

HE refrained from manifesting to them a form which they might recognise, doing that outwardly in the eyes of the body, which was done by themselves inwardly in the eyes of the mind. For they in themselves inwardly both loved and doubted. Therefore to them as they talked of Him He exhibited His presence, but as they doubted of Him He concealed the appearance which they knew.—GREGORY.

For they walked not with their eyes shut, but there was something within them which did not permit them to know that which they saw.—AUGUSTINE.

The Evangelist expressly witnesseth this, lest any should think that the figure of Christ's Body was changed. Therefore, although Christ remained like Himself, He was not acknowledged, because the eyes of the beholders were withholden ; by which the suspicion of a ghost, or false imagination, is done away with.

CALVIN.

Though their walk was the wrong way, to wit, from Jerusalem to Emmaus, yet their talk was the right way, for they talked of Christ, and therefore they fall into the happy company of Christ Himself. They had Christ in their company, yet they knew Him not. Thus Christ is oft with us and we know it not, when our Lord appeareth not to us in that form wherein we do expect Him.—CHR. NESS.

Good fellowship doth no where so well as in the passage to heaven.—BP. HALL.



"Abide with us: for it is toward evening. . ."—
S. Luke xxiv. 29.

THE RESURRECTION

THE REVELATION THROUGH LOVE

He made as though he would go further. And they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in to abide with them.

Luke XXIV. 28-29.

NOW, this relates not to falsehood. For not every thing we feign is a falsehood, but only when we feign that which means nothing. But when our feigning has reference to a certain meaning it is not a falsehood, but a kind of figure of the truth.

Otherwise all the things figuratively spoken by wise and holy men, or even by our Lord Himself, must be accounted falsehoods.

Because the Lord feigned as if He would go further, when He was accompanying the disciples, who knew not whether it was He, what does He mean to imply but that through the duty of hospitality men may arrive at a knowledge of Him; that when He has departed from mankind far above the heavens, He is still with those who perform this duty.—AUGUSTINE.

Because then He was still a stranger to faith in their hearts, *He feigned as if He would go further.* He who was the Truth itself did nothing then by deceit, but exhibited Himself in the body such as He came before them in their minds. But because they could not be strangers to charity, they invite Him as if a stranger to partake of their hospitality.

Now behold Christ since He is received through His members, so He seeks His receivers through Himself. They lay out a table, they bring food. And God whom they had not known in the expounding of Scriptures, they knew in the breaking of bread.

GREGORY.

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May we not take these words as summing up the whole story of His life? He would have gone further. Great as were His words, mighty as were His deeds, the sense of restraint, of limitation, is ever present in the Gospel story. He could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief.—W. ROBERTSON NICOLL.

Who can imagine the infinite ardour and yet delicacy of Divine Love! The urgency and yet the non-intrusiveness of the Holy Presence!—J. PULSFORD.

Doubtless He would have gone further, if the disciples had not detained Him. God, who sees and hears all things, often seems to us, not to see us, and not to hear us. He exercises our faith in His knowledge and love, by seeming to be ignorant and unmerciful. So Christ tested and proved the desire of His disciples to keep Him, by showing an intention to leave them.

CHR. WORDSWORTH.

Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger joined them, courteous as a friend,
And asked them, with a kind engaging air,
What their affliction was, and begged a share.
Inform'd, He gathered up the broken thread,
And, truth and wisdom gracing all He said,
Explained, illustrated, and searched so well
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That, reaching home, "The night," they said, "is near,
We must not now be parted, sojourn here."
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And made so welcome at their simple feast,
He bless'd the bread, but vanished at the word,
And left them both exclaiming "'Twas the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all He deign'd to say?
Did not they burn within us by the way?"

WM. COWPER.

THE RESURRECTION

THE RESURRECTION OF FAITH

He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and wherefore do reasonings arise in your heart? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself : handle me, and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

Luke XXIV. 38-40.

JEROME observes that our Lord *before* His Passion walked on the water, and even enabled Peter also to do the same, and yet no one would say that Peter had not a real human body.

After our Lord's Resurrection from the dead, the condition in which His own human body lived and moved was different from the manner of its ordinary being and acting before His Passion. What had been extraordinary then, became ordinary now.

CHR. WORDSWORTH.

Christ who rose is the same Christ who suffered. . . . Christ is seen to be changed, but none the less He is also seen to be essentially the same. Nothing has been left in the grave, though all has been transfigured ; . . . changed because He now belongs in His humanity to a new order. He can obey at His will the present laws of material being, but He is not bound by them.

WESTCOTT.

The body of Jesus was now in a transitional state. We have no experience by which to form a clear idea of this transition, any more than of that to which it tends, the glorified body.—GODET.

The question has a singular interest as witnessing to the identity of character, if one may so speak, of the risen Lord with all that had belonged to His humanity in the days of His ministry. He, too, had known what it was to be "troubled in spirit," and out of that ex-

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perience had grown the tender sympathy which showed itself in the words addressed to the disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled." Now they had a trouble of a different kind, and still, as before with the two who were on their way to Emmaus, He seeks to calm and sustain them.

The test thus offered to the disciples, like that afterwards given to Thomas, was to be to them a proof that they were not looking on a spectre from the shadow-world of the dead. The Resurrection was a reality, not an appearance. In St. John's words, "which our hands have handled," we have an interesting coincidence with the use of the same word here. The conditions of the problem must remain, however, transcendental and mysterious. There is a real corporeity, and yet there is a manifest exemption from the common conditions of corporeal existence. What Thomas asked for was the evidence which had, he heard, been given to others.—E. H. PLUMPTRE.

This intimate contact is a privilege for the hesitating and the timid. There are in every generation some men who are afraid to come near enough to religion to do it justice. It inspires them with a certain curiosity, but with less of curiosity than of apprehension. . . . We all of us must have met in life men who look into the Bible now and then, enter a church now and then, engage in religious conversation now and then, but on the whole are suspicious, distant, unwilling, as they say, to commit themselves. . . . To such our Lord says, "Handle Me, and see"—the sacrament of My death, the words of My Gospel, can only thus alarm you while you keep at a distance from them; to come close is to know the warrant of the reality of religion.

H. P. LIDDON.

THE RESURRECTION

THE REVELATION THROUGH FAITH

(I) CONCERNING THE PAST

And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the scriptures; and he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day . . .

Luke XXIV. 44-46.

LET those, then, who dream that Christ could have done such things by magical arts, and by the same art have consecrated His name to the nations to be converted to Him, consider whether He could by magical arts fill the Prophets with the Divine Spirit before He was born. For supposing that He caused Himself to be worshipped when dead, was He a magician before He was born, making a nation prophesy His coming?

AUGUSTINE.

After having presented Himself to be seen with the eye, and handled with hands, and having brought to their minds the Scriptures of the law, He next opened their understanding that they should understand what was read.—BEDE.

The likeness of the promised Mediator is conspicuous throughout the sacred volume; as in a picture, moving along the line of history in one or other of His destined offices—the dispenser of blessings, in Joseph; the inspired interpreter of truth, in Moses; the conqueror, in Joshua; the active preacher, in Samuel; the suffering combatant, in David; and in Solomon, the triumphant and glorious King.

NEWMAN.

THE REVELATION THROUGH FAITH

(2) CONCERNING THE PRESENT

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.

Luke XXIV. 47-49.

BUT, indeed, if you mark well, there is a near alliance between the Resurrection and repentance; reciprocal, as between the sign and the signature. Repentance is nothing but the soul's resurrection. Men are "dead in sin" (saith the Apostle); their souls are. From that death there is a rising: else, were it wrong with us. That rising is repenting: and, when one hath lien dead in sin long, and doth wrestle out of a sin that hath long swallowed him up, he hath done as great a mastery, as if with Jonas he had got out of the whale's belly: nay, as if with Lazarus he had come out of the heart of the earth; ever holding this, that Mary Magdalene, raised from sin, was no less a miracle, than her brother, raised from the dead. And, sure, repentance is the very virtue of Christ's Resurrection. There it is first seen; it first showeth itself; hath his first operation in the soul, to raise it.—BP. ANDREWES.

But as a general does not permit his soldiers who are about to meet a large number, to go out until they are armed, so also the Lord does not permit His disciples to go forth to the conflict before the descent of the Spirit. And hence He adds, *But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

CHRYSOSTOM.

THE REVELATION THROUGH FAITH

(3) CONCERNING THE FUTURE

It came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven.

Luke XXIV. 51.

HE departed in regard to what belonged to Him as man ; He remained in what belonged to Him as God. He departed in the nature, that is limited to one place ;

He remained in that which is omnipresent.

AUGUSTINE.

If the Lord had been raised again to our present life, subject to death, there would have been no pledge of a new human life ; the chasm between the seen and the unseen world would have remained unbridged.

He withdrew in such a way as to suggest most impressively to those who were assembled with Him that He had entered on a new mode of connection with His Church.—WESTCOTT.

As in His life they had seen the way to the kingdom, and in His death the price of the kingdom, so in His Ascension they had the fullest proof of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the human body, and of His continual intercession at the right hand of God.

A. CLARKE.

The Ascension of the Lord was the completion of the Resurrection and the perfect expression of the exaltation.—MARTENSEN.

Without doubt the Ascension must be apprehended as a special, and that as the last, stage in the history of the earthly manifestation of our Lord, but at the same time, as a necessary consequence, and as the most excellent crown of His Resurrection. . . . This Ascen-

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sion itself, the final goal of the earthly manifestation of the Lord, what is it itself in its turn but a transition to a new, but by no means to a last period of His miraculous history? Here, according to our opinion, lies the deepest ground of the seemingly enigmatical phenomenon, that the miracle on the Mount of Olives is not placed more strongly in the foreground. No final point, but a point of rest, is it. The Lord is indeed gone away, but in order to return again, and the whole heavenly life into which the Ascension introduced Him is only a great interval, comprehending centuries, between His first and His second appearance.

J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE.

Oh, what was it to behold the Lord, thus gloriously ascending! Never, from the beginning of the world, was there such a Festival in the heavenly Jerusalem, nor will there ever be again one so solemn, until the Day of Judgment, when all the elect will be presented there with their glorious bodies. The Ascension is properly the most solemn Festival of our Lord Jesus, because on that Day He began to "sit at the right hand of His Father," and to rest from His labours of Redemption; and also it is properly the Festival of all the heavenly spirits, because they conceived a new joy on beholding our Lord, who then for the first time appeared in heaven under the form of Humanity; and it is also not less properly our Festival, because on that Day was human nature exalted above the heavens; and because, unless Christ had ascended, the Holy Ghost would not have been given: and therefore St. Bernard says that this most glorious Solemnity is the consummation and fulfilment of all other solemnities, and the happy termination of the whole journey of our Jesus Christ, Son of the living God.—BONAVENTURA.

ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL
CRITICALLY CONSIDERED

BY

F. R. BARRY, D.S.O., M.A.

THE
THIRD
STUDY

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ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL

CRITICALLY CONSIDERED

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ALL scientific history nowadays must start from investigation of "sources." It cannot be content to quote "authorities" simply at their own face-value, but must press back behind the traditional statements to the evidence on which they, in turn, rest and examine it independently and critically. The historian must decide how much authority can rightly be attached to the "sources"; how far, for example, the statements are removed from the events which they claim to discuss and how nearly they are contemporary or first-hand. Again, he must try, if he can, to estimate the general trustworthiness of the witnesses—to decide how much to allow for prejudice, for unconscious bias in their interpretation, for desire to prove a point in their choice of incidents. And often, after this cross-examination, he will find himself obliged to discard or modify positions assumed in the standard histories. But only after such critical inquiry can he feel reasonably confident that he is writing history objectively.

The Gospels claim no exemption from this process. The more sincerely a Christian man desires to know all that can be known about the Master, the more should he welcome, and seek to understand, the dispassionate application of criticism and the rules of historical evidence to his documents. He will want to be sure how far he can really trust these four precious little treatises, which have had more influence on human history than all other books ever written taken together.

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Can we regard them as trustworthy evidence for the character and teaching of Jesus Christ?

For some, no doubt, the inquiry is foreclosed. They are Holy Scripture, and that guarantees their contents; they come from on high, and to test or question them is presumption, if it is not blasphemy. But those who feel thus would do well to bear in mind that this was not the attitude of the Church at the time when the Gospels were being written. The process by which they *became* "Holy Scripture" is one of the strongest grounds for trusting them. Christianity was not founded on the Gospels: the New Testament grew out of Christianity. And the Synoptic Gospels as we have them presuppose about forty years of developing Christian experience, the Fourth Gospel about seventy. They were written for the second generation of adherents to the new religion. The first generation did not need them. It is likely enough that from the very first the Christian missionaries used collections of characteristic sayings of Jesus, and the local communities would know them well. We can see, for example, how in 1 Corinthians St. Paul's appeal on controversial issues of faith and practice in that group of converts is again and again to the teaching of the Master. But he does not think it necessary to quote; he could take a knowledge of it for granted, and only reproduces the actual words—which he had himself "received" from the first believers (cf. 1 Cor. xi. 23)—when they were being forgotten or obscured. But the first generation needed no Gospels: it could rely on the rich and vivid memories of those who had " companied " with the Twelve through the days of the historic ministry, " from the Baptism of John till the day in which He was taken up " (Acts i. 22).

As this generation began to die out and the Church was becoming a world-wide organisation, the need arose to recapture and preserve the facts and the atmosphere of the early days, to sort out and collect the various traditions, reminiscences, and written notes of "sayings," and work them into some coherent whole, to fashion from them a portrait of the Master. This would help those who had never seen Jesus but knew Him as a Presence in the heart to realise what it had meant in Galilee to stand among the crowd and listen to Him, what impression He had made on those who heard, what things had been spoken and suffered and achieved. In a word, it would give a permanent standard of reference for the devotion of coming generations. In this sort of way the Gospels came to be written.

Now, there were, as St. Luke tells us in his preface (i. 1), a number of attempts to collect material from the eyewitnesses and compile "gospels." Some of these attempts are still extant and more may at any time be discovered, but they were never endorsed by the Great Church or admitted into the Canon of "Scripture." Hence they are called the "Apocryphal Gospels."¹ The point of importance is that out of all of them the Church selected four, and only four, for official sanction and preservation. This was not done, of course, by a committee meeting. It was rather that gradually and imperceptibly these Four commended themselves to the minds and hearts of believers in the great Christian centres as being true to what they had been taught of Christ, and to Christ as they knew Him in their own experience. The other attempts failed at that test. In other words, the fact that our Gospels

¹ They may be read in English in Dr. M. R. James's volume *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford Press).

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were preserved inside the Canon of the New Testament is the guarantee that the portrait they offer us is one which commended itself to those Christians who were best in a position to judge.

This in itself gives us confidence. But it is still theoretically arguable that the Gospels may reflect faithfully the consciousness of the Church at the time, and that this is all we can be sure about. What warrant have we that they are true in fact? To answer this objectively and critically involves an attempt to analyse the sources out of which our Gospels were compiled. And this has been one of the finest achievements of New Testament scholarship in the past half-century. We will give here a very rough summary of results.

It has long been recognised that the Synoptic Gospels are not three parallel, independent narratives. They are inter-related, not merely in the sense that all are concerned with the same subject-matter, but by way of direct literary connection. A close analysis of the language and of the plan of construction and arrangement makes clear that there is behind the Synoptic Gospels some actual written Greek document which in some way controls the three books as we have them. It is also clear that St. Matthew and St. Luke are somehow related to one another by common relationship to St. Mark. We find, for example, that almost the whole of Mark is embodied in the other two Gospels, and that while one or other frequently differs from it, the second almost always agrees. We find, too, that the order of arrangement—the general plan and sequence of the Ministry—is apparently dependent on Mark's order. And, in general, that while the complex facts, both of agreement and of difference in the portions common to all three Synoptics,

can be satisfactorily explained on the hypothesis that Luke and Matthew were each and independently using Mark, the reverse hypothesis will not fit the facts. Mark is clearly not using Matthew, and still more clearly he is not using Luke. Neither do the facts yield any evidence that Matthew and Luke are using one another. This position is now generally accepted—that Mark's Gospel is the foundation-document for the narrative portions common to the three.

But constant tradition connects the Marcan narrative with the preaching of St. Peter. It is held that John Mark—whose own home was at Jerusalem (Acts xii. 12), where he must himself have witnessed the scenes at the Passion—went to Rome with St. Peter as his interpreter and subsequently committed to writing what he could remember of his mission-sermons. Mark, in other words, represents the earliest traditions of the Roman Church, and embodies the reminiscences of Jesus of one who had been among His closest friends. Here, at least, we are on secure ground.

But this by no means covers the whole field. Apart from the common stock of narrative, Matthew and Luke also preserve selections from the Parables and Sayings of the Master. Much of this matter is common to them both, though in different contexts and sometimes in different forms. Now, these sections in the first and third Gospels present precisely the same striking facts both of similarity and divergence as compel us, in dealing with the common *narrative*, to posit the use of a common written document: exactly similar arguments suggest here the existence of some second source on which they were both drawing. Such a hypothetical second document is described by scholars by the symbol Q (from *Quelle* = Source). It must be realised

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that there is no evidence, beyond that of the literary facts themselves, for the existence of this book or paper. But, as we saw, it is natural to think that the early missionaries would need some collection of the Sayings of Jesus, and that one or more would be drawn up very early. (We have seen how at Corinth, in A.D. 52, some of the key-sayings were well known, and in fact it could not well be otherwise.) Originally, no doubt, such a collection would have been written out in Aramaic, but the document with which we are concerned is a Greek translation, and one made very early; for there is evidence that this document was known to and utilised by St. Mark. That is, it existed in Greek before 65 (the probable date of Mark's publication) and in all probability a good deal earlier. It too, then, like the narrative of Mark, takes us back into the generation which had been with Jesus in Galilee and Jerusalem. Dr. Streeter thinks it was composed in Palestine, possibly by the Christians in Capernaum, and was taken thence to the Greek-speaking Church in Antioch.

We have thus reached this position. (1) The Synoptic Gospels are not independent drafts on a common stock of floating tradition, but are in intimate literary connection. (2) Mark wrote out the memoirs of Peter, leading up to the Passion as the climax (it is a "Gospel," not a "life" of Jesus), which was used by the writers of Matthew and Luke. The Marcan version is thus the more original and can be used to control the other two in cases where either differ from it. On the other hand, an event which all three narrate has neither more nor less attestation than if it were recorded in Mark alone. (3) There was also a collection of teaching, known to Mark and used freely

by Matthew and Luke, which lies behind the non-Markan matter common to the first and third Gospels. Thus the Synoptic Gospels were compiled out of two basal documents (one of which is the Gospel of Mark itself) together with certain other material (the Birth-narratives, for instance), far more extensively used in Luke than in Matthew, which is "peculiar" to either one or other and which must depend on sources of information at which we can guess but cannot fix with certainty. (4) Thus, though our Gospels are not the work of eyewitnesses, we can trace them back to our Lord's contemporaries.

This so-called "two-document hypothesis" has now been accepted for a good many years.¹ It has, however, recently been modified, and specially in relation to St. Luke, by Dr. Streeter's great and original work² which puts the whole problem in a new light. There are certain facts which the old hypothesis never quite adequately explained and which (as Dr. Streeter has now demonstrated) can be far better explained in another way.

There are certain curious facts about St. Luke taken merely as a literary problem. First, as regards its affinities with Mark. From iii. 1 as far as ix. 17 it appears to follow Mark pretty closely, but at this point there is a large omission. The whole material of Mark vi. 44—viii. 27 is left unrecorded at this point—to the great detriment, the reader feels, of the inner consistency of his narrative. What is left out is the walking on the water after the feeding of the five thousand, the clash with the Pharisees on the vital issue

¹ See for example Burkitt, *Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus* (Constable).

² *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (Macmillan, 1925, 21s.).

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of outward and inward "purity," followed by the startling withdrawal "into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon"—a retirement out of Palestine altogether. Then follows the tale of the Syro-Phœnician woman, "Ephphatha" and the return to Galilee, the feeding of the four thousand and the mention by name of Cæsarea Philippi, where the crucial scene occurred which Luke relates (Luke ix. 18), when in the next verse he returns (apparently) to the Marcan narrative at viii. 27. But he follows it only for thirty-two verses. And at ix. 51 begins a section, lasting down to xviii. 14, which has no apparent reference to Mark and seems to be drawn from some other source or sources. This, which Streeter calls the Central Section, contains the greater part of the material which is "peculiar" to St. Luke and some of the most precious sections in the whole evangelical tradition. It is sometimes called the "Great Interpolation" (i.e. into the framework of Mark). And thirdly, St. Luke's narrative of the Passion differs so strikingly from the Marcan story as to make us wonder whether it is not drawn from some independent source altogether. And this is obviously true of the final chapter of the Gospel, which follows a quite different tradition in describing the appearances of the Risen Christ, which St. Luke places in Jerusalem, whereas it is pretty clear that the lost ending of St. Mark placed the appearances in Galilee.

St. Luke's Gospel thus begins and ends quite differently from St. Mark; it omits a very crucial block of narrative, and inserts in the middle 351 verses (and these some of the most characteristic) which seem to be unconnected with Mark. In fact there is far more non-Markan matter than there are extracts from Mark (Streeter, p. 259). It is rather odd to describe

these facts by saying that into the framework of Mark other material has been inserted! Should it not, perhaps, be the other way round—that into material drawn from other sources some extracts from Mark have been incorporated? An examination in detail of other facts—too technical for elaboration here—fortifies Dr. Streeter in this conclusion. He conceives the process of composition thus. The writer had before him the document Q, *plus* another collection of material embodying traditions and reminiscences current in some other local centre (the matter preserved in St. Luke alone). This document is described by the symbol “L” (Luke’s source). Out of Q + L a complete Gospel was compiled, named by Streeter “Proto-Luke,” beginning at John Baptist’s teaching—iii. 1 certainly reads like the intended opening of a volume—and ending with the Resurrection Appearances. Into this Proto-Luke an editor who was in possession of the Marcan document subsequently introduced extracts from it; and later still the Birth-narratives were inserted in front of the original opening; the result being St. Luke as we know it. This conclusion is winning wide acceptance.

Now, it may be thought that this is an arid business, of no interest save to professional critics. But the very opposite of this is true. For critical analysis of this kind puts us at the point from which to appreciate the human values behind the documents. For (1) although we speak of “an editor,” he is not a merely anonymous compiler. A minute inspection of the style and language makes it quite clear that St. Luke as we have it is the work of a single hand—the hand that composed, for example, ch. xv. and the other specifically Lucan portions. Even in the drafts from St. Mark, while

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the original always "shows through," the editor's touch is plainly visible. It is not, then, a question of a mere compilation, but of a whole work which has passed through several stages. But now, by precisely the same linguistic scrutiny, Harnack has shown that the writer of St. Luke is beyond all doubt the writer of the narrative in the Travel-diary of Acts (xvi. 10-40, xx. 5-end). St. Luke, the companion of St. Paul in the great missionary exploit which brought the Gospel into Europe, his comrade in travel, work, and imprisonment, is the writer of the third Gospel. And St. Paul, or at least the memory of St. Paul, is beside the writer as he works.

(2) The "sources," in the last analysis, are of course "men, not manuscripts." We have traced St. Mark back to St. Peter and shown that it preserves the impression which Jesus printed on the mind of Peter, and the kind of portrait of the Master cherished by the believers in Rome. "Q," as we saw, may have been compiled in Palestine; but the fact that it was translated into Greek shows that it was early in circulation among the Greek-speaking churches, and it may very likely have been preserved at Antioch—the first home of non-Jewish Christianity (Acts xi. 19-26). It is interesting that an early tradition makes Luke himself a native of Antioch.¹ Can we trace "L"? The careful reader notices that the great Central Section in St. Luke (ix. 51-xviii. 14), which contains a large part of the specially Lucan matter, appears to be located in

¹ This is perhaps supported by a curious reading in Acts xi. 28, where the Western text adds the words, "And there was much rejoicing; and *while we were gathered together* one of them, named Agabus, said . . ." i.e., if this text is correct it adds another "We" section (cf. the change of person from third to first in Acts xvi. 10) and places the author himself in Antioch. Several scholars accept this.

Samaria. It seems to depict our Lord as making His way on the final journey to Jerusalem not by the pilgrim-route east of Jordan ("Peræa," "across Jordan"), as is described in Mark's narrative, but by the direct way though Samaria. He would here be safe from Herod Antipas, whereas Peræa was in his jurisdiction. On the other hand, the Samaritan hostility (Luke ix. 53) made Jewish pilgrims to Passover take the Peræan route as a rule. It is probable that our Lord and a few close friends went up by way of Samaria, while Peter and the rest of the Twelve went with the pilgrim-caravans east of Jordan. Jesus and the rest of His company rejoined at the Fords east of Jericho and together climbed up the fifteen miles to Jerusalem (Mark x. 32, Luke xviii. 31). Thus Mark describes no events in Samaria, for the good reason that Peter was not there. How Luke heard of them is not hard to guess. We remember that after the trial before Felix he was with St. Paul two years at Cæsarea (the seat of the Imperial Procurator) awaiting further trial of the case. Now, at Cæsarea, in Samaria, resided Philip, one of the Seven (Acts vi. 5, viii. 5-40), a member of the very earliest circle of Greek-speaking adherents to the new Faith. The way in which St. Luke mentions him (Acts xxi. 8) as their host on St. Paul's last journey to Jerusalem half suggests that he means to refer to him as an "authority" for some of his statements. It is at least a probable conjecture that he gave St. Luke the "Samaritan" information. Nor is it unlikely that Philip's daughters, who, as St. Luke says, were prophetesses (Acts xxi. 8), are responsible for that special interest in and privileged information about *women* who came into contact with Jesus, which is one of the characteristics of this Gospel.

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The sources, therefore, at least behind this Gospel, represent two Greek-speaking and one Palestinian centre—Rome, Antioch, and Cæsarea—and the Gospel itself reflects the influence of long association with St. Paul and mission-work on an imperial scale. And this at once serves to explain the contrast, which must strike any attentive reader forcibly, between St. Luke and the Gospel of St. Matthew. It must be remembered that early Christianity developed in two quite different ways at once. Our Lord was a Jew, and the Gospel was preached to Jews in the forms of thought and language familiar to them. The first community after the Resurrection is depicted for us as Jewish through and through. Even though the Jewish authorities had crucified their Master, the disciples still frequented the Temple services and observed all the requirements of Judaism. They believed that they knew who the Messiah was—Jesus, who had been crucified under Pilate—and this was the burden of the earliest preaching. This is clear from the early chapters of the Acts. The aim of St. Peter at Pentecost, for instance, was to convince the great crowd of pilgrims that Jesus, who had been crucified and raised, would shortly appear as Judge and Messiah to inaugurate the expected New Age. In the meantime there was a period of waiting; the Heavens must receive Him for a while; and St. Peter urged his hearers to repentance that they might be ready against the Day of Judgment and take their place in the true, restored Israel. This was the earliest Christian proclamation—buttressed by proof-texts from the Jewish Scriptures—“that the Messiah is Jesus” (cf. Acts v. 42, ix. 22, etc.). The little company in the Upper Room were but “particular” or “peculiar” Jews. St. Paul’s later idea of the “Body of Christ,” a Society

organised by the Christ-spirit and existing independently in its own right, had not yet dawned on their imagination. *Acts* is designed to trace the widening out of the earliest Jewish-Christian community into the Catholic Church of the Empire. The first step did not come from the Christian side ; it was taken by the Jewish authorities, who proscribed the heresy about Jesus (*Acts* iii.-v.). But the decisive fact in the development was the challenge thrown down by Stephen (*Acts* vi., vii), who saw more clearly than the original Twelve what was really involved in the Christian attitude.

It is easy for us to see that our Lord's teaching necessarily entailed some such development. His Gospel could never be confined inside the frontier of Judaism ; nor (as He said Himself) could the new wine be stored in the old skins of the Jewish system (*Luke* v. 37). But that was not immediately recognised ; and Stephen was the first to define the issue. Stephen headed the earliest " liberal " movement. The cause of his martyrdom seems to have been the claim that " Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the Temple and the customs which Moses commanded "—that the New Wine, that is to say, would burst the skins. This provoked the first organised persecution and the break-up of the community in the capital. The expelled Christians " went everywhere," carrying the Gospel with them, and a flourishing Church sprang up in Greek-speaking Antioch, which became the headquarters of the liberal school, and the base for St. Paul's missionary activities. The future of Christianity lay there. St. Luke is the Gospel of the Pauline Churches.

The remains of the early community in Jerusalem,

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presided over by "James, the Lord's brother," continued to interpret the new faith in terms of the Jewish dispensation. For them the Jewish Law was still binding, even on those who had accepted Jesus (Acts xv. 1)—a view which St. Paul controverted vehemently, especially in *Galatians* and *Romans*. For them Jesus is the expected Messiah, the Fulfiller of the Old Testament prophecies, the Giver of an ideal Law to Israel. For them the Christian hope is largely concentrated on the expectation of the Lord's Coming and the ushering in of the Messianic Age. The Gospel ascribed to St. Matthew reflects these tendencies and this conception of Jesus and His religion. To it we owe much of the highest value; not least the emphasis on Christianity as a "way" of life and a quality of *conduct*—the gift of the Jew to his Gentile fellow-Christians. But yet it is clear that this interpretation had no real future in the Imperial world. It was far too narrow, and did not correspond with what was already an accomplished fact—the incorporation of Jew and Greek together into a new fellowship of the Spirit. A Gospel was needed in terms of Universalism for Greek-speaking Christianity. St. Paul's travel-companion undertook it. An accomplished, educated man with a trained faculty of observation and considerable literary gifts, he set himself (Luke i. 1) to work over the extant documents and construct for the Gentile Christians a portrait of the Jesus who had inspired St. Paul's labours. It was not that he set out to prove a point—he was far too conscientious an historian. But it was inevitable that his upbringing, his professional interests and association with St. Paul's missionary activities should help to determine his choice of his material and the shade of colour with which he invests

it. Nuremberg on its hill is the constant background of all Albrecht Dürer's woodcuts; the Madonnas of the Italian Renaissance have behind them the landscape and cypresses of Italy. Something like this may be said of the Gospels. The background of St. Mark is Capernaum; that of St. Luke is a Hellenistic city. An illustration of this may be noticed in the story of the paralytic man (v. 17-26). In Mark the scene is a cottage in Capernaum, a one-storeyed house of sun-baked brick. They went up by the steps on to the mud roof, and (as Peter had said) "dug it through," letting the mat down into the room below. In St. Luke—as Prof. Ramsay has pointed out—the scene is a house in a Græco-Roman town. They let the patient down "through the tiles"—there were no tiles on the house St. Peter lived in—into the *atrium* of the Roman dwelling.

"There is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is rich in mercy unto all them that call upon Him." So St. Paul had proclaimed as he wrote in Corinth (Rom. x. 12). And this faith possessed St. Luke as he planned his Gospel. Even in such a conventional compilation as the Genealogy of Jesus (iii. 23-38), the difference from St. Matthew is striking. For the latter, Jesus is the son of Abraham, the consummation of the hope of Israel. St. Luke traces back the descent to Adam, the supposed progenitor of the human race. Out of the heart of humanity He came, out of its pains and its aspirations, to fulfil the destiny of all mankind—the Universal Saviour and Deliverer. More than the Jewish hope was involved in His coming: the whole purpose of Creation found in Him its meaning and its goal. (Cf. St. Paul's speculations about the second Adam, and the developed

thoughts in Eph. iii. and iv.) He is the focus of human possibilities.

In accordance with this, Luke brings to the front of his narrative the story of the sermon at Nazareth (iv. 16 f. ; ? = Mark vi. 1-6) in which the new Teacher declares His programme. It is the special function of the Anointed One¹ to proclaim deliverance to the outcaste, to set free those whom tyranny has crushed. In His own country He will not be honoured ; but the history of the chosen people shows that some of God's most signal acts of power have been wrought right outside the circle of racial and religious privilege. Many widows were in Israel, but Elijah was sent to Sarepta in Phœnicia ! The Master, when He had first proclaimed the good news, had, as it were, a map of the world behind Him. This note sounds through the narrative as it proceeds. In the story, for instance, of the Centurion's servant (Lk. vi. 1-11)—drawn probably from " Q "—St. Luke inserts the testimonial of the Jewish Elders who came on his behalf : " he loveth our nation and has built us a synagogue." Divine gifts of faith and intuition were to be found in non-Jewish hearts, as St. Paul found among the " God-fearers " and the Gentiles (cf. Rom. ii. 13 f.). The hard correctness of Simon the Pharisee is shown against the saving faith and love of the prostitute who came in to his dinner party (Lk. vii. 36-50). It is St. Luke alone who has preserved for us the story of the Good Samaritan. It meets the question " Who is my neighbour ? " on the answer to which all moral progress turns. Our conceptions of what is just in social conduct depend on our conception of the area within which moral

¹ Christ, *χριστός* = the Anointed ; it is a title, not a proper name. St. Paul made " Christ Jesus " a personal name.

obligations hold. The "widening of the area of common good" (to use a phrase of T. H. Green) involves criticism and enlargement of the meaning of the term "justice." A closed aristocracy, for example, will take a different view of what is just from a society which admits the claims of the unprivileged and the manual worker. Now, the Jewish notion of loving your neighbour was, of course, confined in practice to fellow-Jews. It involved, as our Lord shrewdly said, the corollary "Thou shalt hate thine enemy" (Matt. v. 43). But here the conception of "neighbour" is widened out to include all human needs and services, and involves an ethic of universalism. And we note that while the Jewish priest and levite passed the man by on the other side, it was a nonconformist from the north who came nearest to the spirit of Christ (x. 29-37). So again in the story of the ten lepers (xvii. 11-19), or the parable of the Pharisee and Publican (xviii. 9-14) : the despised and outcaste win Christ's approbation, while the orthodox take the grace of God for granted. Once more, he records the story of Zacchæus (xix. 1-10). Here was a vulgar, ridiculous little man, a profiteer, and deservedly disliked. Out of all with whom He could have stayed in Jericho, Jesus chose this man to be His host. And Zacchæus "stood forth"—drew himself up, we might say, to the height of his new resolve and his new-found manhood, the outcaste restored and made a man by the friendship of the Master. "He himself also is a son of Abraham." The true Israel, as Paul would have said, is composed of those who accept the offer of Jesus.

One can find a similar motif in the attitude to Pilate in the last scene. St. Luke is at pains in the Passion-narrative to exonerate Pilate in every way he can and

throw the blame on the Jewish authorities. It is true that the other Synoptists also do this, but with nothing like the same emphasis. St. Luke had good cause, as St. Paul's companion, to be grateful to the Roman courts and magistrates, who had often protected them against the Jews. It was natural that he should place Pilate in as favourable a light as possible. There is also, perhaps, an apologetic purpose. When *Acts* was written, probably under Domitian, Christianity was a proscribed religion ; and St. Luke was concerned to contrast the attitude of officials like Gallio at Corinth, who had definitely given judgment that it was not actionable in the Roman courts. *Acts* was published partly as an appeal from the new to the older imperial policy. It may be that the treatment of Pilate in the Gospel is intended as a similar appeal. The Roman representative at the time had refused to accept the charge of high treason ; how, then, can the imperial Government sustain the charges brought against His followers ?

This universalistic attitude was of course congenial to St. Luke's temperament. If we seek to describe his temper of mind, the word that at once suggests itself is Humanism. He was a Greek, with the Greek's consuming interest in the motives and activities of men. *Nihil humani alienum putat*. And that, no doubt, is why, of all the Gospels, St. Luke appeals most to the twentieth century. He has painted for us a portrait of The Man. It is he alone, for example, who has given us that flash of insight into His inner life, by recording the great saying near the end (xxii. 28), " Ye are they which have continued with Me in my temptations." The story of the Temptation in the Wilderness, which all three evangelists place at the

beginning, is but the symbolic account of an experience which lasted all through His ministry. "In all things He was tempted like as we are, save without sin." That brings Him closer to human hearts and minds. It is Luke, again, who brings out for us in his portrait the tenderness of supreme strength. He alone shows us—what to our Lord's contemporaries must have been suspicious if not scandalous—His frank and intimate friendships with women. In the south, there were Martha and Mary in Bethany; there was the woman off the streets who washed His feet with her tears at the dinner party ("a poor sort of prophet," said Simon the Pharisee); there were the ministering women—the Magdalen, Joanna, Susanna—who supported Him and the work with their contributions and went up with Him to the end. Above all, there is the wonderful scene at Nain (vii. 11-17)—"the only son of his mother, and she was a widow"—and the sheer human pity it evoked from Him. Nothing could show more clearly than this scene the falsity of that "official" portrait—if it is not better described as caricature—which presents Him as doing the various miracles to vindicate His claim to divinity and because that was the rôle He had to play. St. Luke knows nothing of an official Saviour. He did not do His cures to prove a point, but just because He was sorry for human suffering. In Mark the lion of the tribe of Judah strides across the stage of history, mysterious, frightening, tremendous; in Luke the Friend and Lover of mankind, the great "Master of the art of living," fashions in life the ideal of manhood. This is not to say that St. Luke is a modern "liberal," anxious to cut out supernatural traits and reduce the Hero of his story to the level of average twentieth-century virtue and its moral platitudes

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about human brotherhood. On the contrary, St. Luke "loves a miracle." The story he has to tell is born in wonder, and a light that is not of earth apparels it. Again and again the narrative climbs up to heights which outsoar the range of our experience (cf., for example, x. 21 f.). It is all in perfect accord with the opening chapters, which, whether poetry or history, have fixed for all time the atmosphere of *wonder* without which the historic Figure fades to nothingness. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee." But it is true that St. Luke of all the three depicts most adequately the Perfect Man, and makes clear that the Father has revealed Himself most completely in the Ideal Son.

Tradition asserts that St. Luke was a portrait painter—a way, no doubt, of recording recognition of his insight into character. We might think that he had been trained to the stage: he is certainly a dramatist to the finger-tips, and there is no writer in the New Testament who has anything like the same appreciation for the dramatic "feel" of a situation. Take, for example, the few quiet phrases which obviously were the opening of his book before he prefixed the Infancy-narrative. "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar [A.D. 29], Pontius Pilate being Procurator of Judæa . . . Annas and Caiaphas being the high-priests, the word of God came unto John." It looks like merely a catalogue of dates; and clearly it is intended to place what follows in its context in contemporary history. But what a dramatic moment it has captured! The curtain rises on a crowded stage. Tiberius, Master of the imperial world, a voluptuary sadist at Capri with the fate of men and people in his power; Pilate in residence at Government House,

responsible for the Roman peace in Palestine; the various members of the Herodian family, Arab adventurers under a Roman "mandate," preoccupied with their little dynastic interests; the great ecclesiastics of the day with their pride, influence, and wealth; all of them thought that they were making history. The great figures pass over the stage—Emperors, Vassals, Princes of the Church—all the conventional subjects of the historian. But the real forces that were moulding history were moving in the heart of a man on fire: "The word of God came unto John in the wilderness." It would be impossible to present more vividly the genius of the Christian revolution.

Further examples of this dramatic power are conspicuous in the great closing chapters. We need look no further than that supreme moment when Jesus, breasting up the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives from the Jericho side, came to the point where suddenly before you the Holy City flashes into full view. Behind are the rose-pink cliffs of Moab, the incredible ultramarine of the Dead Sea; around, the grey olives and the sheep, with dark cypresses below; before, the city stands up on its hill, its domes and minarets "caught in a noose of light" as the sun sinks down behind the walls of it like a chariot of fire. There can be few more magnificent sights on earth.¹

towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Our Lord was a poet, and it moved Him deeply. But it was far more even than the beauty and pathos of a great city that moved Him. He was coming to it as Messiah, to claim the City of God in God's name.

¹ Is this the subconscious material of the Vision in Rev. xxi. ?

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Into the very walls of Jerusalem were built illimitable possibilities—the heroism and loyalty of centuries, the faith and devotion of her seers and prophets, the songs of her singers, the prayers of her saints. In the plan of God, Jerusalem was destined to be the centre of a renewed earth. But Jerusalem had been faithless to her trust; unreality had sapped her soul and she had rejected her opportunity. “He came to His own, and His own received Him not.” Therefore He knew that the tendencies at work in her must march on to inevitable destruction; the City of Peace had no longer any future; her towers and palaces and all that she inherited must perish, leaving not a wrack behind. “They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another.” Thus “when He beheld the city, He wept over it” (xix. 41-46).

This scene St. Luke found specially significant. It showed that in the mind of the Lord Himself, Jerusalem and the Jewish dispensation were not the last word in the Divine plan. The barriers of privilege were down; for Israel had refused its opportunity, and the purpose of Redemption must go forward, if not through Israel, then in spite of it. The purpose of God which was disclosed in Jesus would work itself out on a larger field, with extended horizons and frontiers wide as the world. For all this—the characteristic thought of Paul—St. Luke found warrant in our Lord’s own teaching and, as we have seen, delighted to record incidents which emphasise His attitude on this point. “It cannot be,” He had said with sad irony, “that a prophet should perish elsewhere than in Jerusalem” (xiii. 33). The humiliations heaped on St. Paul by the Jews had verified the experiences of Jesus. Yet there is not in Luke, as there is in Matthew, any note of anti-Jewish acrimony. He had caught from St.

Paul the sense of the tragedy of it, and writes in pity rather than in bitterness. For what he was anxious to assert was not the negative fact of Jewish failure so much as the positive good news of a glorious offer open to all mankind. For him, Jesus is the Saviour. To St. Luke, more than to any other evangelist, we owe the Gospel of Divine pardon, open to all who will turn to God and take it. The lovely stories recorded in ch. xv. set forth for ever in unforgettable pictures the central solution of human need. They press back behind all conditions, all divergences of interpretation, into the heart of the seeking love of God. The parable of the Prodigal Son, so rich in its unfading human interest (the plot of half the novels ever since), is the offer which the Christian preacher took to the restless world of dying classical culture. It is, indeed, the core of the Christian Gospel—that the all-holy and transcendent God, infinite in truth and righteousness, has drawn near to blind and sinful man to restore him to Divine fellowship. It is open to all, unmerited, freely offered; it is an act of sheer Divine initiative, God's "way out" in man's extremity. We need only come in sincerity and penitence.

This is brought out also in the parable of the Divine Invitation (xiv. 15-24), and still more in the tale of the Pharisee and the Publican (xviii. 9-14). The Publican recognised his utter need and simply brought it to the Divine mercy: "he went down to his house accepted by God rather than the other" (we notice the Pauline word "justified," i.e. pronounced "not guilty" in the Divine assize). The Pharisee was one who, as we should say, mistook auto-suggestion for prayer. "He stood and prayed to himself"—nurturing his own self-satisfaction on communion with a subconscious "fantasy."

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St. Luke devotes a striking amount of space to preserving records of the Lord's teaching on the method and temper of true prayer. The shorter form of the Lord's Prayer as he gives it is probably the more original version (xi. 2-4, see R.V.), the more familiar version in St. Matthew being that which had come to be used in public worship. This is the Master's own perfect summary of the right attitude of prayer. But St. Luke illustrates and amplifies by many other extracts from the Sayings. The gifts of God are always unmerited; we cannot earn the Divine favour, as the Pharisees tended to think we can; nothing gives us a claim upon God. When we have done all that is commanded us—and no son of woman will ever have done that—we are to say, "We have merely done our duty." We do not put God under an obligation! (xvii. 7-10). Yet God is ever anxious to give; the analogy of human fatherhood gives the clue to understand God's ways; and if earthly fathers with all their imperfections know how to give their children what they need, "how much more shall your Father who is in Heaven give Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (xi. 11-13). (Notice, in view of modern criticisms, the frankness of our Lord's anthropomorphism.) Here, indeed, is the real heart of prayer. Jesus, we notice rather to our surprise, spoke of prayer quite simply as *petition*; but what is it that we should ask God to give us? In the end, He has nothing to give but Himself, and the Holy Spirit is God's gift of Himself, lifting the child to the intimacy of sonship. Moreover, St. Luke makes clear by further extracts that the Master did not think of prayer as *passive*—an asking, and a waiting for an answer—but as active, energetic exploration of the treasures of the Divine Nature. "It is

always he that asks who receives, he that seeks who finds, he that knocks to whom the door is opened" (xi. 10). This is the point of the difficult parable about the widow and the unjust judge (xviii. 1-8). It is simply an argument *a fortiori*: "if importunate and unwearied prayer prevails with an unrighteous man, how much more with a holy and loving God?" But perhaps the most striking of all the illustrations is the arrangement of matter in ch. x. 25-end. The priest and the levite in the parable, who passed the man by on the other side, are examples of one false religious attitude. Here were people so preoccupied with what they supposed to be religion that they had no room for the claims of human need. Was there not something wrong with this religion? It was built on a wrong conception of God. Then, with dramatic contrast, comes the complement in the story of Martha and Mary at Bethany. Martha is the type we know far better, who interprets religion in terms of social service. We watch her, ruthlessly benevolent, determined to "serve," unable to sit still. She was so intent upon what she called religion that she left no time to worship and adore. Hence that lack of inner peace and quiet of which the strained note in her voice is a symptom—"Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?" The answer gives the secret of inner peace. "You are distracted about many things; few things are necessary, or even one; and Mary has chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her." Our truest prayer is our dominant desire; and when our desire is trained to God Himself, life becomes harmonised and tranquil.

This note of the inwardness of true religion—which was certainly fundamental in Christ's attitude—is one

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which St. Luke delights to emphasise. It is he to whom we owe the master-saying, "The Kingdom of God is within you" (xvii. 21)—even in the hearts of the Pharisees, though they were too blinded by the conventional mind and unreal standards of value to recognise it. And throughout, in recording teaching about the Kingdom—the central fact in the outlook of our Lord—He seems to be anxious to emancipate it from its popular Jewish imagery and setting, and express it in spiritual and moral terms. This, of course, raises enormous problems. If we contrast St. Matthew with St. Luke in sayings which are common to the two, we sometimes seem to be moving in different worlds. The one is saturated in Jewish colour and embroidered with apocalyptic imagery; the other is more Hellenic and more ethical, and thinks of the Kingdom less as an external event in the future than as an inward temper and attitude of mind. Which of them represents the true tradition? Probably we state the problem wrongly if we put it thus in the form of a dilemma. The teaching of Christ was of no one time or people; both the Gentile and the Jew can find in it the fulfilment of all their aspirations. For myself, I should hazard an answer to the question in a statement which may sound paradoxical—that the Matthew-tradition is probably rather nearer to what Jesus actually said, while St. Luke's account is probably much nearer to a true interpretation of what He meant.

It accords with the ethical bent of St. Luke's mind that he has collected the well-known body of teaching about property and wealth on which so much stress is laid at the present day. He gives us a trilogy of parables, each beginning "a certain rich man" (xii. 16-22, xvi. 1-10, xvi. 19-31). We can see from *Acts* how

interested he was in the earliest Christian experiments in the economic expression of the new life (Acts ii. 44, iv. 32 sq., v. 1-11). But probably it is quite illegitimate to claim these parables as endorsing any special attitude of Christ towards the mere distribution of wealth. Indeed, He Himself disclaimed it strongly (xii. 15). Their point is simply that material wealth is "wealth" in God's sight only in so far as it subserves spiritual values. The "rich fool" made it an end in itself, and so when his soul was required of him "it is certain that he could carry nothing out." He went out of life empty-handed, leaving his material goods behind. Had he used his material resources as an instrument of spiritual values, he would have gone out ennobled and enriched, with new spiritual achievements wrought into his own personal life (cf. xii. 21, 22 and the sequel in Luke's arrangement). The point of the "Unjust Steward" seems to be similar. "Worldly people are far more resourceful in advancing their own worldly ends than religious people are in theirs. Therefore, I say to you, use money—with all its possibilities of evil—to secure satisfactions that last" (xvi. 8, 9). The third, the story of Dives and Lazarus, carries the same fundamental meaning over to the other side of death. The rich man condemned himself to hell—not by being rich, but by indifference to the claims and needs of others in this life. He had acquiesced in a "great gulf" between privilege and poverty. And this "great gulf" fixed his destiny. To live in selfishness is to be in hell, for it is to cut oneself off from love. As is the use we make of our opportunities, so is the character we form; and as our character, so is our destiny (xvi. 19 sq.).

For St. Luke, as for St. Paul, the highest expression

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of Christian character is generosity in service. What our Lord in St. Luke describes as the Kingdom of God, that St. Paul subsequently called *Agape*; and the great poem in 1 Cor. xiii. is, at it were, the Sermon on the Plain—the description of that attitude of mind which makes for the Kingdom of God on earth—re-written in the light of Pentecost. And St. Luke has preserved for us the haunting picture in which the Son of Man, the Messiah-Designate, as He passes through the Cross to His “Glory,” discloses the essence of that life of which Calvary was the seal and climax. “Which is the greater, the man at his dining-table, or the servant standing behind his chair? . . . I am among you as the Serving-man” (xxii. 27). The Glory of God is the glory of sacrifice, as had been already suggested in the narrative of the Transfiguration (ix. 28–36). There, immediately after the recognition by Peter as Messiah, Jesus had disclosed to him His secret. “Yes, the Christ, but a Christ of such a kind as none of you has ever dreamed of. The Son of Man must suffer many things . . . and be killed . . . and on the third day rise again.” A week after that tremendous assertion the vision came to the three on the mountain. Exactly what happened we shall never know; but it is clear that the whole experience is controlled by the thought of the impending Passion. (There appeared Moses and Elijah talking to Him about His decease which He was to accomplish in Jerusalem.) It was when the knowledge first began to possess them that He was one who should save by suffering and enter into His Kingdom by the Cross that they beheld Him in His true significance. They saw Him in a light which was not of earth, girt with the splendour of Eternal God. It was for them, if we may put it so,

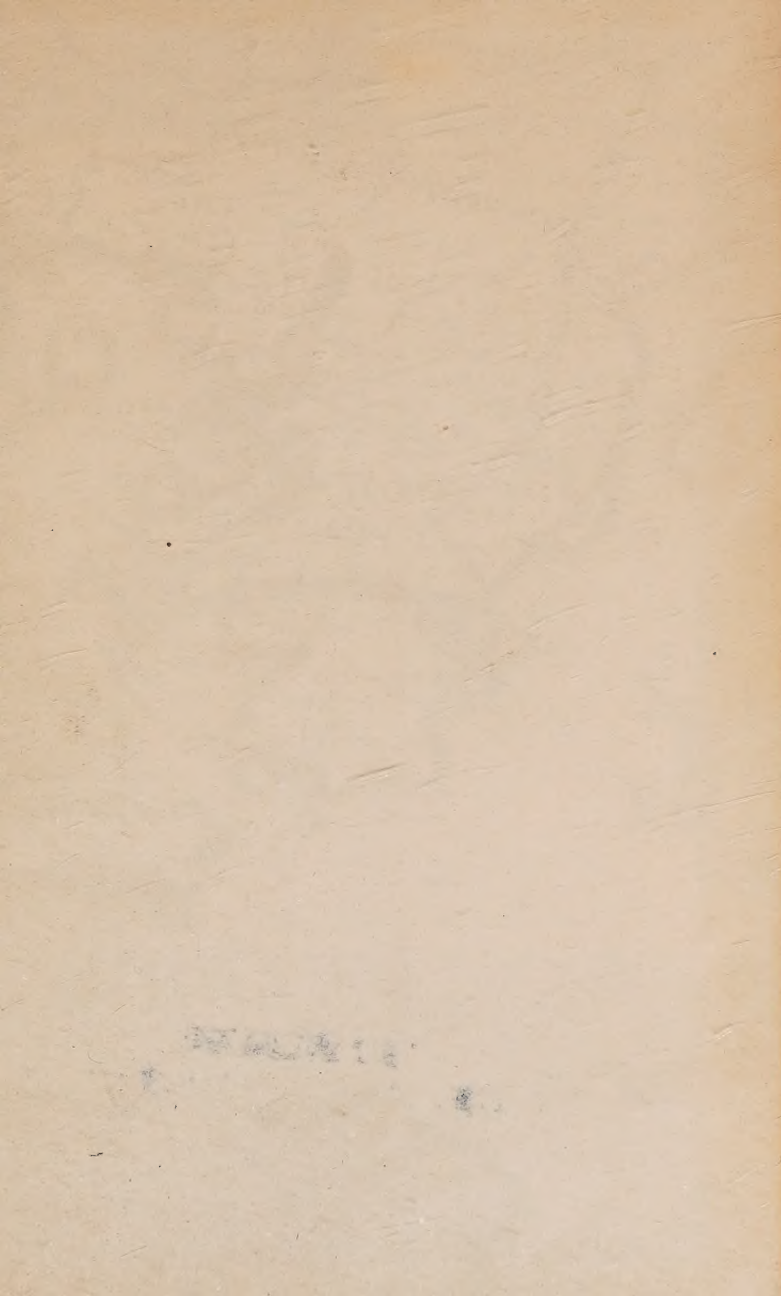
a new definition of what is meant by Heaven. The pinchbeck finery of earthly courts fades into lifeless insignificance, and sacrificial Love shines forth in glory as the most divine and majestic thing there is. They saw that Jesus was One who ever transcends the categories of our experience, the standards of our accustomed valuations—that in Him the divine Love was completely realised, and that where He is, it is good for us to be.

And here is the heart and centre of the Gospel. The Divine has entered into human life, accepting our limitations and our sorrows, passing through suffering to Victory. Christianity goes out into the world with a victory behind it. It is not a body of teaching about God, still less is it good advice about living rightly. It is rooted in a Transcendent Personality. It is not the teaching of Christ that St. Luke would give us, but one attempted portrait of Christ Himself.

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*Printed in Great Britain by
Hazell, Watson & Viney Ltd.
London and Aylesbury*



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